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LOCAL

School Board, parents debate the IB program at Middlebury Union High School

By RACHEL LU
Editor at Large

The recent election for the Addison Central School District (ACSD) board on March 7 ignited debate around the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, and in particular, issues surrounding mental health, equity and the structure of the program.

According to Suzanne Buck, who was reelected last week and has served on the board since 2016 as a representative for Bridport, the IB program was introduced by a group of high school educators while ACSD was becoming a unified district that included the towns of Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge. In 2016, the ACSD voted unanimously to implement the IB program across its nine schools in an effort to develop a common learning community across the district.

"Some of the driving force was that the structure of IB is one that teachers across the district, depending on the curriculum area you work in, get to meet as teams," Buck told The Campus. "You get to learn the depth and breadth of the curriculum from pre-K to twelfth grade, including what is required and what can help students get there."

The IB authorization process involved a two to three year review procedure that was completed in 2020. ACSD currently offers the Primary Years Program (PYP) in all seven elementary schools, and the Middle Years Program at middle schools and high schools. The option to pursue the Diploma Program is available for high-

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STUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP HOLDS PROTEST AGAINST MIDDLEBURY'S CONTRACT WITH CHASE BANK

By RYAN McELROY
News Editor

Approximately 100 Middlebury students, professors, administrators and community members gathered inside Wilson Hall to protest Middlebury's contract with Chase Bank due to its investments in the fossil fuel industry on March 14. The demonstration was organized by the Sunday Night Environmental Group (SNEG) as part of their Stop Dirty Banks campaign this year.

The event featured live music by student band Soopspoon, food and several guest speakers, including Bill McKibben, a well-known author and activist and Middlebury's Schumann Distinguished Scholar in Environmental Studies at Middlebury. SNEG also had a printmaking table for attendees to stamp T-shirts and pieces of fabric with anti-Chase messages, in addition to a financial resource table to share information about how to change banks.

Birch Banks '25 and Anna Geldert '25, co-directors of SNEG this semester, organized and led the protest in collaboration with other SNEG members. The protest was the latest part of the group's Stop Dirty Banks campaign this year, which aims to convince the college not to renew its contract with Chase Bank when it expires in 2025.

Stop Dirty Banks is a national campaign run through Third Act, an environmental activist organization for people over 60 that aims to encourage people and organizations to cancel their bank accounts with and cut up their credit cards from JP Morgan Chase, Wells Fargo, Bank of America and Citibank. The campaign targeted these banks because they have made the largest investments in the fossil fuel industry. In 2021, Chase Bank invested $51.3 billion into the fossil fuel industry.

"There's just really not a way to look at it sustainably and say that it's okay to bank with Chase," Banks said. "We understand there are a lot of circumstances that go into choosing a particular bank, and that's something that we have put a lot of thought into. We also started to do research and realized there are alternatives that will probably work for the school."

David Provost, executive vice president of finance and administration, expressed his willingness to collaborate with SNEG in the next two years to explore alternative banks.

"Business decisions made by the college are always made in the best interest of the college. Our students, our alum, faculty and staff voices are important," Provost said.

The college currently uses Chase Bank for its Purchasing Card (P-card) system. According to JP Morgan Chase, P-cards are issued by businesses to their employees in order to simplify making purchases and consolidate payments. Middlebury issues P-cards to its employees and other departments

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DALEELAH SALEH/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Though the protest was originally slated to take place outside, it was moved to Wilson Hall due to a snow storm.

Faculty set to vote on proposal of new statistics major in April

By LILY JONES
Senior News Editor

Several professors in the Mathematics and Statistics Department — formerly the Mathematics Department — are spearheading a proposal to add a new statistics major. The Educational Affairs Committee (EAC), made up of six faculty members, is currently writing their formal recommendation, which will be distributed to faculty ahead of the all-faculty vote that will ultimately decide the fate of the proposal on April 7.

Mathematics and Statistics Professor Alex Lyford is one of the faculty members leading the proposal to create the new major. According to Lyford's estimation, around 10 students per semester graduate having taken enough statistics classes to constitute a major.

"They take all of the courses in our proposed major, we're already offering these courses, but their degree says mathematics — it says something they're not. So one reason we're proposing this major is to call these students what they are: statisticians," Lyford said.

Summarizing the arguments in favor of the new major, Psychology Professor and member of the EAC Mike Dash noted that there is significant student interest in the creation of the major and that many of Middlebury's peer institutions have already instituted a statistics major.

"We want to be able to bring in expertise, and in the absence of a major it is much harder to recruit

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Student-run restaurant serves up late-night tacos

By LILY JONES
Senior News Editor

The mural-covered walls of the Gamut Room have been the setting for many a musical performance, student-band concert or Wednesday Open Mic Party (WOMP) set. But now, the space is home to a new venture: a late-night taco business.

Ajani Wilson '24.5 and Jonah Roberts '24 founded their taco stand "Side Pocket" this past November. The team sells their tacos most Friday nights from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. in the Gamut Room.

Wilson was inspired to start the business after a trip to California last year where he tried street tacos for the first time. To learn more, he watched YouTube videos about the street food scene in Mexico and how street tacos are made. After that, Wilson was hooked.

Last summer, while in Washington, D.C., Wilson hosted several events where he served tacos to people in need — giving out 140 meals in one day as part of his work running a nonprofit where he cooks food for the homeless.

He then brought his newfound passion to Middlebury.

"I made [birria tacos] for my friends, and they were joking around saying I should start a food truck," Wilson said. Wilson and Roberts then worked with the Innovation Hub and Executive Director of Food Service Operations Dan Detora.

Side Pocket currently sells birria and honey-lime sweet potato tacos for $3.50 and $3 per taco, as well as plantains, red beans and rice, birria and regular fries.

"I am really good with meats, but not everyone eats meat, so I defaulted to my friend Jonah [Roberts], who is a vegetarian, who came up with the honey-lime sweet potato option, and red beans and rice is something I've grown up with," Wilson said. "For the vegan options, we have plantains and fries."

But the most popular menu item by far is the birria tacos, made of slow-cooked meat in a pan fried tortilla.

"I like the color, I like the taste, and the story of how it originally came to be in Mexico," Wilson said.

Wilson spends between 20 to 25 hours a week preparing to serve tacos — which includes picking up ingredients, slow-cooking the meat in Proctor Dining Hall and preparing the toppings and sauces.

Side Pocket is totally self-funded, although it currently has a small margin of profit.

"The profits are slim because food is so expensive right now," Wilson said. "I pay the people that work for me, but I haven't been able to pay myself, so I am trying to figure out a way to keep going."

Wilson estimates that he sells 300–450 tacos per night, serving roughly 150–200 patrons. Most weeks they sell out by 12 a.m.

The tacos have been a hit so far, and Wilson hopes to make the business' schedule more regular, but he has run into some challenges.

"Our goal is to do it every week, but it depends on sales and equipment working... since I am doing everything on my own, it's difficult," Wilson said.

The team ran into issues over J-Term when the outlets in the Gamut room blew out. Wilson noted that they need restaurant-grade outlets to keep up with the demand.

Tristian Allard '26, who was a first-time customer of Side Pocket, ordered the birria and fries combo last Friday. "I was looking for a late night snack, but I didn't want the Grille, so I decided to come here and try this, and it was worth it," Allerd said.

Other customers commented on the scene surrounding the taco stand.

"It's a great atmosphere, and I really like it, and I'm glad it's a thing," Ian Bolton '25, a returning customer, said.

"Everyone is so friendly, I'll have to come here again," Allard said.

Side Pocket plans to work with Dining Services to open a food truck sometime this spring.

"Overwhelmingly people love the flavor, the music, what's on the menu. Feedback has been really good. I love serving people and making people smile with the food, that's why I do it," Wilson said. "All the people who come get the tacos, thank you for coming out."

The Side Pocket team posts updates and menus on their Instagram account, @middleburysidepocket.

COURTESY OF YOUNESS CHEBOUBI
Ajani Wilson '24.5 prepares tacos for "Side Pocket."

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such as the Student Activities Office to streamline expense management.

"We very aggressively issue a lot of P-cards because from a finance and accounting standpoint it is a way to centralize. So we need the tool of a P-card," Provost said.

According to Alberto Citarella, associate vice president for finance and assistant treasurer, Middlebury's P-card system currently has 900 active users with $17 million in sales volume last year.

Provost explained that Middlebury is currently in a three-year contract with Chase Bank for its P-card system, which will end in 2025. In line with its typical practices, the college used a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to solicit proposals from multiple banks.

Among other factors like the compatibility with Oracle Finance, an important consideration for the college to weigh is the proposed volume rebate. According to Provost, the rate is generally around 2–3% for a volume rebate that is earned by making purchases and returned to the college to help offset expenses.

"JP Morgan gave us the best rate at the time… We did an RFP process, they were the most competitive," Provost said. "I'm hopeful that if we have a broad enough net, and banks who are more responsible desire to get our business, they will be close to what JP Morgan [offered]."

He added that the college is willing to work with SNEG on finding a new bank during an open RFP process in 2024 leading up to the contract's possible renewal in 2025.

"I have no issue with doing an open RFP process to find a bank who can meet our needs. I would love to see more student engagement around our efforts as individuals and humans on our impact on climate change," Provost said.

However, Provost also acknowledged the importance of managing college finances when considering these decisions.

"If the students come back with a recommendation to go with Bank X, and Bank X is half the [current] rebate, we will have a difficult time justifying that because of our fiduciary responsibility," he said.

Banks and Geldert both shared an optimistic outlook for further collaboration with Middlebury following a fall meeting between several members of SNEG with Provost, Citarella and Derek Hammel, director of investments and treasury operations. Banks and Geldert described the college as welcoming to their perspective on this issue.

"I think that the school is really receptive to looking at, what are the reasons that we should change from JPMorgan Chase as the provider for our operating account, and what we now need to look for in terms of like a different bank," Banks said. "I will say that we've been in contact with other banks, and it seems promising."

Provost expressed a similarly positive spirit about the collaboration with SNEG this year and into the future as the exploration process and contract negotiations continue.

"I wholeheartedly welcome student involvement in the decisions like these, as I worked for three years with SNEG back in 2017 to 2019 on Energy2028. The student involvement led to a better outcome for the college. We achieved this by working together respectfully and openly," Provost said. "The group of students with interest in our P-card provider are approaching this work in the same manner, and we welcome it."

Geldert shared an update on where SNEG and Middlebury are in the process of discussing alternative banks and entering into the ongoing negotiation process during the next two years.

"We just got the school to start talking to one [bank] that we picked out that we really like and Bill McKibben has kind of approved. So we've been talking to [the bank]. And we've been talking to the school. And I think they're just starting to talk to each other, which is something we're really excited about," Geldert said.

The protest featured many speakers with different experiences with Chase Bank and perspectives on climate change. McKibben was the demonstration's keynote speaker, speaking about his decades of experience in climate activism and how Third Act is now working to use older people's influence to affect change.

"The real prize is not switching on our credit cards and perfecting our lives, the real prize is getting these big banks to change. That's why we do this to put pressure on them," McKibben said. "Middlebury can be a really powerful place for making that happen."

He further shared an anecdote about how Vermont legislators considering proposals for the state to divest from fossil fuels had learned from the college and its own process of divestment that occurred several years ago. McKibben shared how influential the "Middlebury Model" was in these conversations by easing the concerns of legislators and giving them a successful example of climate reform.

"So the work of those kids who have long since graduated and gone out into the world… is continuing to accelerate and make real positive, powerful change. So what you're doing here is really important," McKibben said.

Fran Putnam, a community representative from Weybridge,Vt. and member of SNEG, shared her perspective on working with college students as part of the local community.

"I really enjoy the interconnection between younger people, and older people," Putnam said. She also spoke about how she made the personal decision four years ago to switch her bank from Chase.

"It probably took four months to make sure we got them all. And then we said, 'OK, we're done.' And we cut those credit cards up." Putnam said. "Our family realized this was important. We did it four years ago, and it's been very successful, there have been no bad consequences, it's possible to do it and I encourage other people to look into it."

SNEG members Asha Kannan '26 and Nínive Carmen Calegari '26 both spoke at the protest. In an interview with The Campus before the demonstration, they shared their experiences of continuing to make an impact on climate change through their personal finances and experience changing accounts from banks such as Wells Fargo and United Bank.

"I think a big hope is that students consider where they open their first credit card, they consider switching their credit card, or they ask their parents, 'How are we spending our money as a family?'" Calegari said.

Kannan added that she hopes the protest will enable students to learn from one another about the impact of their personal financial decisions and how to factor sustainability into those choices.

"I think sometimes finances seem very daunting, and having a student talking to other students makes that a little bit easier," Kannan said. "I think if I was having somebody else teach me who I could relate to, I think that makes the experience a lot easier to navigate."

Event speaker Charlotte Roberts '25.5 shared her perspective about how students can avoid complacency and create change in their own lives. "Here at Middlebury we are basically entirely reliant upon the systems that perpetuate the demise of the planet… How do we rid ourselves of the things on which we depend?" she said. "My guess is one step at a time."

Robby Burton '26, a SNEG member who attended the protest, shared his excitement about the turnout for their event. "I'm surprised at how many people responded to the advertising. It's crazy to see this much support for something I've worked on," he said.

Geldert also spoke to the lack of awareness among students about the college's partnership with Chase despite the bank's investment in the fossil fuel industry.

"To come to the school and not know that about Chase Bank, and the relationship with Chase Bank — again, not like totally blaming the school for that — but it just doesn't really align with the values of the majority of the student body, a lot of the professors and the school as a whole," Geldert said.

Geldert added that one of the central goals of the protest was to increase student participation in the Stop Dirty Banks campaign so that students can better support SNEG's efforts to change Middlebury's bank.

"I think student involvement is really important, though, too, because the administration isn't gonna get there on their own. They need to see that people are passionate about the issue and that organizations like SNEG are really trying to move forward with stuff," Geldert said. "But at the same time, I think it's been overall a really good relationship with [the administration] so far."

Middlebury partnered with Champlain College and St. Michael's College through the Green Mountain Higher Education Consortium (GMHEC) when entering its current contract with Chase. According to Provost, this partnership increased the college's buying and negotiation power during the RFP process, and they intend to partner together again for the upcoming contract.

"I've had a conversation with the [GMHEC] Chief Operating Officers and the other CFOs, just as a heads up that this interest was going on on the campus," Provost said. "Because we're in Vermont, because we have shared values, I think the issue of sustainability is a criteria that they would support."

SNEG plans to continue its campaign against Chase Bank throughout the rest of the year and into 2024. The group will continue to partner with the college while spreading awareness about the impact students can have in promoting sustainable financing.

"As consumers, people have power. As consumers, students have power, even when they don't feel like they do," Calegari said. "There are ways for our voices to be heard and to use the means with which you have to make a change."

Will Hinkle '26 spoke to the assembled crowd about the importance of starting the process of switching banks. After his speech, Hinkle joined several other audience members in cutting up his Chase Bank credit card. "No, I have not switched banks. I'm doing this today to signify my commitment to ending my ties with Chase Bank. Why haven't I switched yet? Well, because it's a process," he said.

Why a fitness center door is now an emergency exit

By RACHEL LU
Editor at Large

Early this semester, an emergency exit alarm was armed on the downstairs door of the fitness center in the Peterson Athletics Complex. Some gym-goers, accustomed to using the door to exit the fitness center, inadvertently set off the alarm by pushing the door. The door is locked from the outside and people must enter through the main entrance of the athletic complex. Using the main entrance means walking around the outside of nearly the entire length of the athletic complex, navigating through corridors inside, before arriving at the fitness center itself.

Gym-goers who were accustomed to using the door continued to use it while exiting. However, a horrible alarm would sound for approximately 15 seconds, causing a great disturbance to others who are working out.

Huthefa Maalin '24.5 is a monitor at the fitness center. He noticed gym-goers continuing to use the door and setting off the alarm.

"It's really bothersome, especially when you are just trying to do your thing and someone goes through the door and sets off the alarm," Maalin said. "It is also too late to stop them because they have already gone through the door."

The alarm had not been installed on the door as of last semester, although the door was locked from the outside. Gym attendees could leave the fitness center through the door but were unable to enter that way. To allow other gym-goers to enter through the door, students regularly placed small pebbles in the doorframe to prevent the door from locking.

In a joint email to The Campus, Director of Athletics Erin Quinn and Assistant Director of Athletics for Operations and Events Franklin Dean-Farrar explained that they have now resumed only using the downstairs door as an emergency exit.

"We temporarily reconfigured the entry and exit of the athletics complex to provide additional access via the back of the fitness center, as part of our Covid-19 protocols," Quinn and Dean-Farrar said in their joint statement.

Students and visitors are instructed to use the front doors of the Athletics Complex as the main entry point. Quinn and Dean-Farrar said there are monitors working at the front desk of the Athletic Complex and at the Fitness Center who are available to answer questions and may ask for an ID. The main doors to the Athletic Complex are the only ones equipped with ID-scanners; however these doors are not locked, so students and other ID-holders do not have to scan in.

"We experimented with keeping those locked, but it made it difficult for visitors to access the building (e.g. prospective students and families, alumni, spectators for games.)," said Quinn and Dean-Farrar. "We leave the doors open so those people may access the building."

Quinn and Dean-Farrar also noted that Middlebury ID holders are allowed to bring a guest to access the facilities. Those who do not have an ID typically check in at the front desk and may tour the facilities. Limiting the points of access to the facility and staffing the front desks enhance the security of the athletics complex, Quinn and Dean-Farrar said.

However, it is up to the discretion of the monitor to ask to see an ID. "There is a monitor at the front desk and at the front desk of the fitness center. They are available to answer questions, but also to report any concerns and they may ask for an ID," Quinn and Dean-Farrar said.

Maalin said that he would rarely ask to see someone's ID when they enter the fitness center.

"I usually don't ID people because I know most of the people, and I have seen them all over the campus," said Maalin. "Specifically I ID someone when I ask: Who is this person? Usually when they look like they're older and not a college student."

Abby Schneiderhan '23 is a member of the crew team and regularly visits the fitness center. Schneiderhan said she does not understand the decision to close the bottom door.

"I don't understand why they close the bottom door if they don't ask for our ID in the main entrance anyways," Schneiderhan said. "It's more convenient to use the bottom door. Especially when I want to use the weights equipment, I just want to start my workout faster and not have to walk so much."

RACHEL LU/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

When students pass through the lower-level door, they now set off an emergency exit alarm.

Faculty set to vote on proposal of new statistics major in April

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faculty that teach statistics," Dash said.

But Dash also noted reasons for opposing or delaying the creation of a statistics major.

"This is not unique to statistics, but there is often concern about pulling resources from other places on campus. We have a fixed number of faculty resources and positions, and any new major locks the college into supporting that discipline," Dash said. "It is difficult to remove a major, it's a pretty enduring commitment to staffing and giving support to that discipline."

One possibility discussed by the EAC is to delay the creation of the major until the Math Department successfully hires another statistician, allowing the department to better support future statistics majors. The department has been approved to hire a new tenure-track statistician, but they were unsuccessful in getting someone to fill the position this year.

"So in two years we would have a fifth statistician, so the timing might look more opportune," Dash explained.

The role of the EAC is to give the proposal an impartial assessment, considering the college curriculum as a whole, Dash explained. The EAC has also been working with students on the Student Government Association (SGA) Academic Affairs Committee to make student voices part of the deliberation.

The proposed statistics major would, like the math major, require the calculus and linear algebra sequence, but, unlike the math major, it would require Introduction to Statistical Science, Introduction to Data Science and a regression course. The current math major senior seminars that are statistics courses would be required for the statistics major.

Jiayi Chen '23, a math major who is planning to pursue a graduate degree and career in data science, would have considered being a statistics major had it been an option. "Statistics has become more and more important in today's industries and would benefit students' future career paths," Chen said. "There are many students who don't realize the potential of a statistics major, and this would give them a clear pathway."

Nicholas Sliter '23, a math and computer science double major, supports the proposed change. "I would likely have been a stats major if it had been offered," Sliter said. He has taken approximately six statistics classes across the Math and Computer Science Departments.

"There is a ton of interest in intro data science and statistics learning, those classes have huge enrollment, so I think that's an argument for the major… everyone wants to be taking those courses," Sliter said.

The faculty vote, which was supposed to take place in February, has been delayed until April to allow the EAC to write up a formal recommendation and so the Math Department can revise their proposal based on feedback they receive from the EAC.

Lyford looks forward to the vote in April and notes that he is open to hearing feedback from faculty and students with thoughts on the proposal.

"The Math Department has spent a long time thinking very carefully about what would constitute a successful major at Middlebury, and I believe that this proposal has a ton of merit, and I hope that the faculty see it the same way," Lyford said.

If passed, students would be able to declare a statistics major as soon as next fall.

Editor's Note: Copy Editor Evan Weiss '25 contributed reporting.

SGA announces Sophomore Senator, Feb Senators

By ELLIE TRINKLE
Contributing Writer

Courtesy Photos

New SGA Senators (from left to right), B Strike '25, Anthony Makhovik '26.5 and Shane Silverman '24.5.

More than 250 sophomores voted for a Student Government Association (SGA) Sophomore Senator in a special election held on March 6, with B Striker '25 winning the spot. SGA also announced the new Feb Senators Shane Silverman '24.5 and Anthony Makhovik '26.5, who ran in an uncontested race.

Approximately 38.7% of the sophomore class voted in the special election. B Striker won the race with 71.1% of the votes and is excited to bring kindness, ambition and accountability to the SGA.

"This is my last semester on campus before going abroad for a year and a half, so being Sophomore Senator is how I'm going to give back to a community that has done so much for me," Striker said.

Striker has previously worked on initiatives within the Anderson Freeman Resource Center (AFC), creating a workshop that spread information on financial aid forms as well as establishing a hair-care workshop for students of color which will now be a regular event on campus. He also helped advertise the services that the Center for Careers and Internships (CCI) offers and worked with Facilities Services, discovering a pre-existing app that makes laundry experience easier that he is hoping to bring to the Middlebury community during his term on SGA this semester.

For B Striker, his ultimate goal as Sophomore Senator is to spread awareness of all the resources Middlebury has to offer. Striker believes that Middlebury has many valuable resources, but students lack awareness about them. He hopes that informing students of these resources will help them to cultivate their own unique community within Middlebury.

"I believe that having a community at Middlebury can make or break students' experience," Striker said. "I also believe that it takes all members to cultivate one, and since I'm a member of the community I feel that it's only my job to cultivate."

Silverman is excited to return to SGA to work on reforming the body by helping it operate more responsibly. Silverman previously worked on SGA in a cabinet position for the External Affairs Committee, coordinating events and managing Middlebury's relationship with the town. Now, as a Feb Senator, Silverman is hoping to continue to make changes that will create more opportunities for students to socialize and better engage with their community.

Silverman is passionate about renovating spaces around campus such as the cafe in the Mahaney Arts Center, as well as adding more lights around campus to make it more accessible in the dark.

"I'd like to see a student government that students are excited about and want to engage in," Silverman said. "I'd like to see a student government that understands how it's supposed to work, understands the constitution, and also understands what students need from it, and I think it's going to be my role to guide it there."

Makhovik noticed there are a lot of SGA members that have been part of the body for a long time, so he looks forward to offering a fresh perspective and bringing new enthusiasm to SGA.

Makhovik also wants to work to keep Ross Dining Hall open in some capacity until 10 p.m. again. He knows there is already some work being done on this project, so he's excited to continue pushing for the change to be fully implemented. He also wants to work on making Middlebury's declining balance higher for all students.

"I believe our activity fees have increased along with our tuition by 4.5% to match the rate of inflation," Makhovik said. "Our declining balance should also reflect that inflation in itself."

Makhovik feels passionate about making change for all students. He looks forward to working with everyone else on the board to make Middlebury a better place.

"I think it's a pretty cool thing that I can have the power to change something about the place that I'm going to live in for the next four years and everybody else lives in," Makhovik said.

All three winners are excited to bring their various goals and passions to the SGA board and work together to make a meaningful impact on the Middlebury community.

"We [Striker and the sophomore committee] have quite a few surprises in store through the end of my term and thereafter," Striker said. "So even after I leave there's still a lot more surprises to come because what we work on now is going to impact the future."

Economics Department to welcome three new professors next year

By JESSICA LI
Contributing Writer

The Economics Department hired three Assistant Professors this winter, who will begin teaching in 2024. The new department members include Zara Contractor, a Ph.D candidate at Yale University; Alice Gindin, a Ph.D candidate at the University of Pennsylvania; and Germán Reyes, a Ph.D candidate at Cornell University.

All three professors stated that the main reasons that brought them to Middlebury were its excellent academic accomplishments in economics and its students' passion for studying economics.

"Middlebury College has an excellent reputation for academic excellence, and the opportunity to work alongside accomplished and dedicated scholars is a really unique one," Reyes said. "I am very excited to work at an institution that is widely recognized for its excellence in undergraduate education and its commitment to a liberal arts education that fosters critical thinking, creative problem-solving and effective communication skills."

Contractor, who studies the intersection of macroeconomics and labor economics, mentioned her interest in the research opportunities at the college. "[Middlebury College] has a fantastic community of researchers there," she said. "So that definitely was a big draw for me."

Gindin is an economic theorist specializing in microeconomic theory with specific interests in political economy, learning and contract theory. She shared her excitement to work with the other two incoming Economics professors.

"The Economics Department at Middlebury is pretty big compared to average liberal arts colleges. But even given its size of twenty-some people in it, you don't expect to join with two other people, which is really exciting," she said. "I'm really excited to meet them and hang out, but also have a shared experience of being new professors, doing the same thing with the same goal. Working alongside them and having buddies is a very nice and valuable experience."

Reyes, who is a behavioral economist interested in labor markets and public policy, talked about his hopes in and beyond the classroom.

"I expect to be intellectually challenged in both the classroom — by engaged students — and in the department — by my incredibly thoughtful colleagues," he said. "I hope to help foster a strong sense of intellectual curiosity among students and to inspire them to become lifelong learners."

Reyes also shared his connection to New England, especially Vermont.

"My partner was raised in New Hampshire. I have spent a lot of time in New England during graduate school breaks — hiking through the breathtaking White Mountains, enjoying fantastic skiing in Vermont and exploring local coffee shops in Boston," Reyes said. "I am very eager to move to Vermont for work and explore the substantial hiking opportunities!"

Contractor, who visited campus at the end of February, expressed her love for snow and excitement about moving to Middlebury.

"I was there [on campus] near the end of February. There was a snowstorm, and I was there, and it looked really beautiful," she said. "Moving to Vermont is going to be a big change. But I'm coming from New Haven, where we have relatively similar weather, and I really like the snow, so that's all good... I'm just excited about everything."

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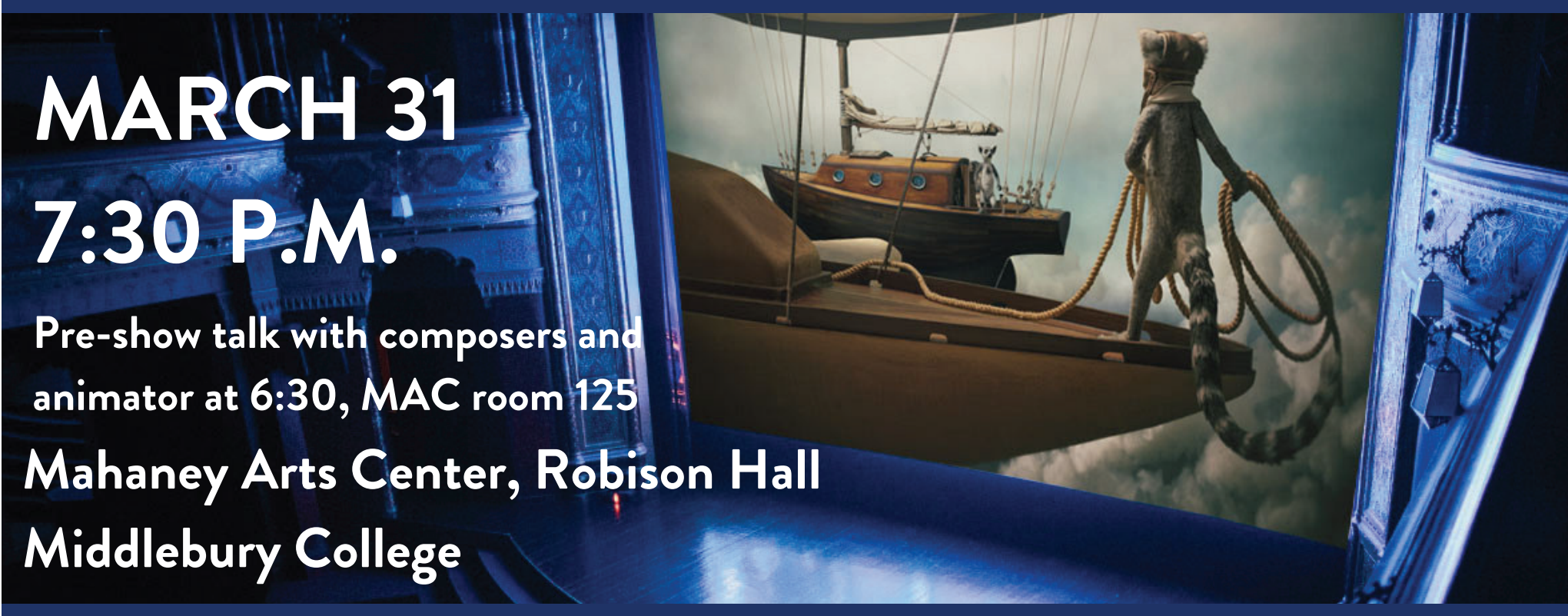

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Middlebury students reflect on new Amtrak stop in town

By MANDY BERGHELA
Staff Writer

Eight months ago, Middlebury became a stop on Amtrak's Ethan Allen Express, which runs from New York Penn Station to Burlington, Vt. As Middlebury's first passenger train stop in nearly 70 years, the new station marks a major improvement in traveling convenience for both college students and town residents.

A monthly average of 477 passengers have taken the Ethan Allen Express from the Middlebury station since its opening, while the nearby Ferrisburgh-Vergennes Station has averaged around 309 passengers, according to Toni Clithero, state coordinator of Operation Lifesaver of Vermont and Amtrak grants program manager.

Before the train stop was added, Middlebury students had to rely on Greyhound or SGA break buses in order to get to New York City. Students who have had the opportunity to take the train expressed hopes that the train will eventually run more than once a day, and that the college will start providing transportation to and from the station.

Nicholas Woreth '26 relies on the Ethan Allen Express to get to New York City.

"Having lived in Europe before and taken quite a few trains there, I have to say that the one that passes through Middlebury is much more comfortable and has way more room than European trains on which I have been," he said. Woreth added that he hopes the number of trains increases to more than just one per day in each direction.

Under the current schedule, one train departs Middlebury for New York City each day at 11:01 a.m.

Clithero, whose job as coordinator for Operation Lifesaver of Vermont is part of the Vermont Agency of Transportation, confirmed that they are considering adding a second daily service on the Ethan Allen Express between NYC and Burlington. "Adding an additional frequency is an objective identified in VTrans' 2021 Rail Plan, and there are many other exciting possibilities to follow," she said.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation 2021 Rail Plan is a 20-year plan that provides a framework for maintaining all of Vermont's rail services and complying with state laws and regulations for safety and convenience. A large portion of the rail plan is dedicated to expanding capacity and usage of the train to match higher demand, as more and more passengers are beginning to choose rail over bus.

"Ridership on the [Ethan Allen Express] since the extension launched on July 29, 2022 has been outperforming expectations. VTrans and Amtrak had projected ridership on the extension to add between 2,000-2,500 riders per month. Since the extension launched, ridership has well exceeded expectations, and has been growing [to] an average of 3,365 riders per month," Clithero said.

Students use the train most for weekend and holiday traveling, and the train can get very packed, according to some students, particularly when arriving midway in Albany. According to Clithero, the numbers also reflect this pattern.

"Weekend travel is always the busiest time for Amtrak trains. The winter holidays this year did result in trains being quite full and with spring break coming, we already had 200 riders booked to board the [Ethan Allen Express] on March 11," she said. "VTrans and Amtrak are monitoring ridership trends and capacity issues on the EAX, and at this time, no additional equipment is considered necessary."

Along with the issue of crowded train cars, some students mentioned that the small station in Middlebury can be difficult during the cold winter months. "It can get really cold in the winter." Woreth said. "Most people come with a car and wait for the train to arrive, but when you don't own [a car] or don't have someone to take you to the station, it can be quite uncomfortable."

Liza Platonov '26 expressed similar sentiments. "The station has no indoor area, and it was freezing outside where I had to wait for the train, which was also running a bit late," Platonov said.

Located on Middle Seymour Street, the station is exposed to cold weather without any heat source and consists of a concrete platform with a few benches for passengers to sit at if they do not have a vehicle to wait in. The station is around a mile, or about a 20-minute walk, from campus.

Tom Nevins/The Middlebury Campus
An Amtrak conductor waves as the train boards.

"I would recommend that they have a bus that goes from the station to the college and vice versa every morning and night," Platonov said. "I felt totally safe walking there in the morning, but when my train got in around 9 p.m I felt much less safe walking back."

Students also expressed concern with the prices of the tickets, which some students said were as high as $93 depending on the rate of occupancy on a given day. Ticket pricing shifts as the departure date nears and the train fills up, so fares can be more expensive depending on when a passenger makes their purchase.

"A one way ticket is something like $75, which is probably not within most college students' budget, and makes a bus much more sensible. I had a ticket paid for by the college as part of the HARC trip during J-Term, but if that were not the case I would have just taken [a] car," Arthur Furniss '23 said.

Editor's Note: Arthur Furniss '23 is on the visuals team of The Campus.

SUGAR-MAKING SEASON GETS AN EARLY START, PAUSES AFTER TEMPERATURES DROP

By CLAIRE YANG
Journalism Fellow

As this year's sugar-making season begins, local producers look forward to temperatures being consistently above freezing to reach their goals for the season.

More than just a topping for pancakes, Vermont maple syrup is the one-of-a-kind natural sweetener that enhances cocktails, desserts and numerous food dishes.

In 2022, Vermont produced over 2.5 million gallons of maple syrup, making it the top producer in the United States. The syrup is produced and processed statewide in more than 3,000 sugarhouses, according to a State of Vermont website. Producers range from family-owned operations all the way up to industrial leaders, who bring syrup to Vermonters' tables via local stores, online shops and restaurants.

In a given maple sugaring season, farmers tap maple trees to collect saps, then boil the saps to produce maple sugar and syrup.

Before the short sugaring season, which typically lasts from late February through early April, sugar makers prepare by cutting and splitting firewood and stringing tubing in the sugarbush — the plot of sugar maples. For the sugaring season to begin, a freeze-thaw cycle is required. The cycle occurs when temperatures drop below freezing at night, enabling the sap to freeze; then as temperatures rise the next day, the frozen sap melts and falls down the tree. This causes the tree to begin to "wake up" from the winter and prepare for spring as sap starts moving in the sapwood.

The unusually warm temperatures early this year allowed the sugaring season to begin early for farms across the state. Lincoln, Vt.-based Twin Maple Sugarworks had their earliest gathering ever this year, beginning the sugar-making process on Feb. 15. They began boiling immediately thereafter, which was also their earliest boiling date.

Not long after that, however, Twin Maple Sugarworks had to shut down their taps temporarily due to a sudden drop in temperatures.

When asked about the outlook for this year's sugaring season, Don Gayle, owner of Twin Maple Sugarworks, said it is hard to tell right now, as it depends so much on the temperature.

"Forty-five degrees, no wind, sunny — that would be the perfect condition for maple sugaring. But we are just not seeing days like that," Gayle told The Campus.

Twin Maple Sugarworks owns 5,200 taps. Last year, they were able to process 110,000 gallons of sap and produce 1,500 gallons of syrup. That number, however, ended up being below average.

The production in a given year depends on the length of the season and the temperatures, according to Gayle. "Last year, our sugaring started on Feb. 23, which was quite early," Gayle said. "But after it got cold, we weren't able to operate until March 7."

For Dave Folino, owner of Hillsboro Sugarworks in Starksboro, Vt., this year's sugaring season also started especially early but did not last as they expected. Their taps started running mid-February, and they started boiling on Feb. 17; but as the temperature dropped, they were not able to continue collecting maple sap.

"The sap is basically water with a little bit of sugar in it," Folino said. "When it drops below the freezing point, it is frozen. It won't run until when the temperature rises to a nice 40 degrees or at least 32 degrees."

Accordingly, despite the initial head start, Folino predicted that the season will end in the normal time frame. Because the farm is located in the mountains, Hillsboro's sugaring season tends to start and end later than other farms due to the greater amount of snow, woods and lower temperatures. For them, sugaring typically starts around the first week of March and ends in the middle of April.

Hillsboro Sugarworks owns 1,600 taps and typically produces 450,000 gallons of sap, 8,000 to 9,000 gallons of maple syrup every year.

Both Twin Maple Sugarworks and Hillsboro Sugarworks have a variety of sale channels. While much of Twin Maple Sugarworks' syrup is sold right outside the sugar house, they also sell at the Middlebury Farmers' Market on Saturdays and supply a number of restaurants in town. For customers interested in placing orders online, they provide shipping services.

In addition to selling at stores in the local Starksboro area, Hillsboro Sugarworks also supplies maple syrup to the town of Middlebury. They sell through the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-Op, a couple of restaurants in town, and are also the supplier for the syrup that is provided at the college and sold in the bookstore.

Both Twin Maple Sugarworks and Hillsboro Sugarworks will participate in the Spring Maple Open House this year. Every year, during the sugaring season, the Vermont Sugar Maker's Association invites sugar makers in the state to open their doors to visitors. This year, the Maple Open House will take place over two weekends in late March and early April. According to the Spring Maple Open House preview, sugar makers, including Twin Maple and Hillsboro, are excited to have visitors take a tour around the sugarhouse, watch the boiling process and have a fresh taste of the pure maple syrup.

VERMONT TOWN MEETING DAY RESUMES PRE-PANDEMIC OPERATIONS

By MAGGIE REYNOLDS
Senior Local Editor

Last week, Vermonters gathered in municipalities across the state for Town Meeting Day. The annual event had the highest turnout of in-person town meetings this year since 2019. Meeting days primarily took place in a mailable ballot format the past two years due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Falling on the first Tuesday in March each year, Town Meeting Day has been a Vermont tradition since 1762, 15 years before Vermont was officially granted statehood, according to the Vermont Secretary of State's Citizen's Guide to Vermont Town Meeting . While meetings 250 years ago involved discussion of smallpox vaccines and letting pigs run free, present day town meetings tend to revolve around electing local officials and approving a budget for the following fiscal year.

Local officials elected at Town Meeting Day typically include a moderator, selectboard members, the town clerk, the treasurer, listers and an auditor, the citizen's guide said.

On Tuesday, March 7, 182 cities and towns gathered for an in-person floor meeting, and another 60 cast ballots by mail, making up a collective $750 million in spending requests, according to VTDigger. This represents a major uptick from the 63 in-person town meetings conducted in 2022.

Major issues that Vermonters voted on included water projects, school construction, street/sidewalk repairs and facility upgrades.

In the town of Middlebury, residents approved the request for a $3.5 million municipal water holding tank, according to The Addison County Independent. They also passed the proposed fiscal year 2023–24 municipal budget of $12.9 million, which represented an 8.3% increase from this year's budget, and the $42 million Addison County School District (ACSD) budget for the 2024 fiscal year, which was a 7.2% increase in education spending from the 2023 fiscal year.

Residents voted on four candidates for two three-year terms representing Middlebury on the ACSD School Board. Youth Services Librarian at Ilsley Public Library Tricia Allen and Senior Analyst at LIDD Supply Chain Intelligence Jason Chance won the two seats.

Residents of other Addison County towns, including Bridport, Cornwall, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge also elected candidates to the district school board.

On the town selectboard, incumbents Dan Brown and Brian Carpenter ran unopposed for new three-year terms, and incumbent Isabel Gogarty ran unchallenged for a two-year term.

Highlights from other town meetings across the state included Burlington residents voting to allow legal city residents who are not U.S. citizens to vote in local elections, Winooski becoming the first town with an entirely LGBTQ+ city council and Colchester approving a $16 million recreation center, according to NECN's Town Meeting Day results.

With the pandemic having forced communities to try mailable ballots in 2021 and 2022, many towns are considering a permanent switch to making all decisions via paper ballots, rather than through in-person floor votes. According to reporting from VTDigger, the municipalities of Marlboro, Bakersfield, Bethel, Bradford, Bridgewater, Coventry, Craftsbury, Danville, Essex Town, Franklin, Highgate, Ira, Jay, Lunenburg, Marshfield, Rockingham, Stafford, Williamstown and Wilmington are all exploring the possibility of a shift to paper ballots.

Proponents of the switch to ballots include the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights, an organization which issued a statement arguing that in-person floor meetings are not equitable for Vermonters with disabilities, older citizens, citizens without access to transportation and citizens who cannot get childcare or time off from work. The Coalition for Disability Rights has also advocated for greater audiovisual technology to make the town meeting process more accessible.

The VTDigger reporting also stated that proponents of retaining the in-person meeting format argue that it gives people a chance to raise questions, revise the budget and walk away with a more complete picture of the town's situation.

While the Vermont League of Cities and Towns has not expressed an opinion on towns switching to a hybrid or mailable ballot format, the league's 2023 Town Meeting Day Preview did emphasize the importance of town meetings to the state's governmental system.

"One of the largest responsibilities voters have at Town Meeting — and one of the ones that makes Vermont's democracy somewhat unique — is that they have the say on how they raise the money their town needs to conduct business, who should pay, and who shouldn't," the preview reads.

The Vermont state government website similarly states the uniqueness of Vermont's Town Meeting Day: It is "a form of government that exists nowhere else in the world outside of New England, town meeting involves direct citizen lawmaking, true government by the governed."

School Board, parents debate the IB program at Middlebury Union High School

Continued from Page 1

Tom Nevins/The Middlebury Campus

Middlebury Union High School, a part of the Addison Central School District, is weighing the future of its IB program.

achieving students in the 11th and 12th grade at Middlebury Union High School (MUHS), though completing the Diploma Program is not a requirement within the IB program.

Students are granted an IB Diploma for completing two years of the Diploma Program and can receive an IB Certificate for completing one year of the program. All students are able to take Diploma Program-level classes without committing to the full two years and/or fulfilling the testing requirements.

According to Mary Heather Noble, a member of the school board and parent at MUHS, the MUHS Class of 2022 had 20 seniors earn IB diplomas and 25 more students earn IB certificates, making up 38% of the graduating class.

Additional students take the Diploma Program-level courses without committing to the two-year track. "This means that more MUHS upperclassmen continued to receive the IB curriculum in their regular MUHS coursework than most people recognized," Noble told The Campus via email.

According to the ACSD Director of Business and Operations Matt Corrente, annual costs paid for IB in the fiscal year 2022 were $79,449 and projected to be the same in 2023. Within these expenses, the district pays a flat fee for the IB program per school.

Three years after its implementation, several newly elected members of the ACSD School Board expressed the need to assess the IB program's ability to serve the district. Jason Chance, who was recently elected to represent Middlebury on the school board, is also a parent and former student in Vermont schools. In response to questions from the Addison Independent prior to the election, Chance stressed the importance of assessing the impact of the program.

"Two-year classes in 11th and 12th grade limit student options and reduce flexibility," Chance said. "The rigorous curriculum can be stressful for students and not all students are thriving in the IB curriculum.

Owen Hamilton '26.5 is a former student at MUHS who completed the Diploma Program and was among the first cohort of students to complete the program at MUHS. Hamilton said the Diploma Program curriculum did not permit much flexibility for students to do extracurricular activities outside of the rigorous class schedule.

"I was a theater and art kid, and that was not great with the rigidity of the schedule of [the Diploma Program]" Hamilton told The Campus. "You have to take six classes, plus the Theory of Knowledge class, and [you have] one block of free time. It wasn't easy taking the classes you had to take and then doing an art class or theater workshop."

Noble also noted the stress that the IB program has placed on teachers in the district. For educators, IB has created more work; while some welcomed the change, others were more reluctant to embrace the transition to IB.

"Obviously our educators have done the heavy lifting of completing the required training and adapting their curriculum to make sure students are being consistently taught and held to the same standards across the district,as well as making sure that 1st graders are being taught what they need to learn to be prepared for 2nd grade instruction and so on," Noble said.

Equity is another concern for the school board. Buck said that considerations for special education learners in the IB program have been discussed since it was first introduced in 2015. As an educator who has worked with students with recognized disabilities, Buck said she is still unsure about how the IB program could support those students in achieving their goals.

Buck also expressed the need to evaluate how students from different socio-economic backgrounds are supported by the program. "Even if all students have the same educational experiences when they're in the school building, it is the socio-economic environment to which they go home that then plays a major role in this," Buck said.

ACSD Director of Communications and Engagement Emily Blistein said the concerns around IB coincide with other challenges the district is facing. The consolidation of the district and the Covid-19 pandemic have added additional stress while also transitioning to the IB program.

It is important to differentiate between the issues that can be attributed to IB and those that cannot be directly linked to the program, Blistein noted.

"There are some big issues that have been linked to the IB that aren't actually IB," Blistein told The Campus. "There's so much misunderstanding within our community; what we've found is that any issue that folks are having with the district, they're attaching to the IB.

Blistein stressed that the goals of the IB program are to support students from different elementary schools in the district and bridge any gaps when they come together at Middlebury Union Middle School.

"IB is actually helping us have a more equity focused approach to learning, because no matter where they go to school, their teachers are collaborating," Blistein said.

The IB program is also an investment towards schools and teachers in the district. Blistein believes IB provides the best framework for teaching and learning, and by purchasing the program, the district receives additional resources to support its teachers and staff.

Noble also noted that the IB program places the ACSD ahead of other Vermont school districts in fulfilling Vermont Education Law's Act 173. According to Noble, Act 173 requires school districts to adopt a coordinated curriculum that ensures equity across the district, achieved through both vertical and horizontal alignment — alignment between grades and across schools — for continued preparedness as students move up in their education.

"Because ACSD has already gone through the IB authorization process, we are way ahead of most Vermont school districts in bringing consistency to the curriculum delivered across its member town elementary schools," Noble said. "So the decision to invest in IB back in 2016 should ultimately help us in our efforts to achieve some of the requirements of Act 173."

Taking this into consideration, Noble said she believes the district has not had enough time since IB was authorized to accurately assess the efficacy of the program.

"If we do try to modify how we implement IB, I would like to see efforts to make sure that the MUHS schedule can offer enough flexibility for students to enjoy all the opportunities they wish to enjoy (e.g., band, choir, art, technical coursework), even if they chose to pursue the IB Diploma or IB certificates," Noble said.

Blistein added that it is a priority for the district to educate the community on the IB program. "The biggest issue we are facing now with IB is we need a community reset on what IB actually is," she said.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE HUMANITIES AT MIDDLEBURY

Op-Ed

Febe Armanios *and* ***Marion Wells*** *are Co-Directors of the Axinn Center for the Humanities.*

Courtesy of Todd Balfour

Last Fall, students in History Professor Elsa Mendoza's Public Humanities Labs course titled "Baseball, Society and U.S. History" (FYSE 1001) reenacted the First World Series (1903) at Virtue Field House. The lab was one of many that Prof. Mendoza developed for the class.

The Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences are the core pillars of a liberal arts education. And yet a well-documented crisis in the humanities, evident in declining majors and enrollments, has swept the country and indeed the globe since at least the financial crisis of 2008.

National enrollment trends show students moving away from majoring in the humanities, and instead opting to enroll in humanities courses to fulfill college requirements or to satisfy non-major interests. While Middlebury has bucked some of these trends, we are not immune to such powerful currents. The danger, then, is that humanities departments will gradually become service oriented, offering classes that primarily fulfill distribution or college writing requirements. Such a shift would in turn dramatically affect staffing and the kinds of courses we can offer within our majors.

In 2020, we wrote a State of the Humanities Report at Middlebury College outlining these concerns and presenting wide-ranging data and analysis of shifts in both general and major enrollment numbers. At the same time, we made several recommendations as to how the institution might respond to these critical pressures. In this piece, we reflect back over our four years as the Center's founding co-directors to consider both how the Center has sought to promote the humanities and, crucially, what can be done to secure its future.

The inauguration of the Axinn Center for the Humanities in 2019 brought Middlebury — with its historical strength in the humanities — back into alignment with peer institutions. Most of our peers had longstanding and well-endowed Humanities Centers that were actively participating in dialogue about this national crisis. We immediately joined these critical conversations and benefited from connections with regional and national partners. Our work in building the Center has been supported by a moving cast of dedicated faculty members on our Steering Committee and by a succession of excellent student Humanities Fellows, who have helped us with everything from providing data for our 2020 Report to creating an archive of photographs and Instagram posts from our major events and activities (follow us @middleburyhumanities).

In establishing the Center, we sought to create a vibrant hub for the innovative, yet often siloed, work being done by faculty and students in humanities departments and programs all over campus. We focused on two central goals: supporting faculty research and inviting novel humanistic pedagogy. One of our first actions was to establish a yearly Faculty Research Seminar centered around a particular theme. Last year's organizing theme was "What is Human?"; this year's is "Toxicity"; next year's will be "The Body." Faculty members from a diverse range of humanistic disciplines gather monthly to work on this theme in relation to their own specific research, with the Seminar culminating in a public panel presentation during the following fall.

All humanities classes teach crucial skills that are highly sought-after by employers, as our report shows, such as critical thinking and analysis, persuasive writing and oral presentation, creative and interdisciplinary thinking, global awareness of other cultures, problem solving, and independent, original research. With the importance of these transferable skills in mind, our new contribution to humanistic pedagogy on campus has been the introduction of the Public Humanities Labs (PHL) Initiative. The PHL Initiative supports faculty as they figure out new ways to integrate humanities skills and expertise into public facing and/or community curated projects that address topics of cultural, social and intellectual importance.

These projects may involve storytelling, oral history, public writing, digital humanities, ethical inquiry, medical humanities and many other areas of knowledge. Each PHL course integrates both experiential, hands-on work of some kind and a public-facing output, whether in-person or digital. In 2021, the Center was fortunate to receive a grant from the Davis Educational Foundation to support the PHL Initiative for three years. With this generous funding, in addition to early seed money from the Fund for Innovation, we have funded forty-three new or redesigned classes since the pilot semester in 2021, including on the Bayeux Tapestry, Baseball, Society, and US History, and Education in the Caribbean. Our PHL Initiative has been recognized nationally as a leading replicable model for public humanities pedagogy in undergraduate institutions, as noted by a 2023 National Humanities Alliance Report.

The Center's commitment to public humanities extends to our support of varied speaker events on campus. This semester, we organized three major lectures focused on critical humanistic topics. On March 6, in collaboration with the Department of History, we invited Jeremy Greene, professor of Medicine and the History of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University and practicing physician in East Baltimore, who spoke about the limits of telehealth in medical practice. And on April 12, Grace Cho, professor of Sociology at the College of Staten Island, CUNY, will read excerpts and discuss themes from her award-winning book "Tastes Like War"(2021), a hybrid text about food, memory, mental illness and trauma.

Our exciting initiatives and programming have directly touched the lives of hundreds of students and dozens of faculty members across campus. This year too, the Center has benefited from the acquisition of 115 Franklin Street — now established as Humanities House — a space which supports and facilitates creative humanistic collaborations within our classes and faculty research groups.

With the national and global humanities crisis looming large, however, we must be proactive in protecting one of Middlebury's core but eroding educational pillars. The Center is seeking a permanent endowment that would ensure the stability and continuation of its work for the coming generations of faculty and students, placing the college on par with its liberal arts peers.

I "learned" American Sign Language in a month... Middlebury College says you can too

Op-Ed

Kendall Schilling *is a member of the class of 2025.*

It is well known to language learners that the Middlebury Language Schools' summer programs serve as some of the most preeminent immersion opportunities in the country. In just seven or eight weeks, complete beginners and advanced learners alike are completely immersed in one of the thirteen languages offered.

Abenaki, Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish are the languages that encompass both the summer schools' curriculum and some of the college's vast foreign language department offerings throughout the academic year. However, there's a very important language missing from this list: American Sign Language (ASL), which feels like a significant oversight.

Middlebury is regularly applauded for its renowned language offerings, but has historically offered only one section of ASL. This course is taught exclusively during J-Term and only enrolls about twenty students. This past January, I was one of the lucky few able to register in that single section. The class was, and has been previously, taught by visiting professor John Pirone from the University of Vermont, as there are currently no employed instructors of ASL at Middlebury.

I can unequivocally say that ASL has been one of my favorite courses that I've taken during my time at Middlebury. We were immersed in the language from the very first class — solely relying on signing for communication. The course went far beyond just language learning, as we learned about Deaf culture in addition to ASL. As we approached the end of January, I was deeply saddened and frustrated by the fact that my learning of ASL would abruptly end after only one month of immersion.

Middlebury also offers language tables: an immersive lunch experience in Proctor Dining Hall with dedicated practice and communication with others only in the target language. However, due to not having the resources, the ASL language table is only available to students during J-Term.

A lack of ASL courses and resources is not unique to Middlebury. Many other colleges and universities don't offer any. However, we should be working to bridge that gap, as approximately half a million people throughout the United States and Canada communicate using ASL as their native language, making it one of the most used languages in the United States.

The Deaf community faces a multitude of barriers already, so why should communication have to be another one? If Middlebury is going to continue boasting a status as a top language school in the country, a greater number of ASL courses need to be offered during the school year and in the summer language schools.

From a student perspective, I know that there is certainly a demand for them. As I said before, I was one of the lucky few actually able to register for ASL this January. Sophomores registered for a J-Term class during the first registration block, so it wasn't a surprise when all the seats in ASL were quickly filled. What was a surprise was the fact that nearly everyone in the class was majoring in something completely unrelated to language. We were all there, drawn only by natural curiosity to learn the language, further demonstrating the desire of students to have access to ASL curriculum at Middlebury.

As a student in Middlebury's Russian Department, I know how dedicated the college can be to teaching languages; but that support is certainly not there for ASL. Key factors in the development of fluency in any language are immersion and practice. How, then, are students of ASL expected to continue learning when ASL resources vanish after only a month?

As a student wishing to continue studying ASL, I had to look externally, enrolling in online modules through the Oklahoma School for the Deaf. Of course, the pursuit of these is purely of my own volition, and I will not receive any academic credit. Ultimately though, I shouldn't have to look for ASL classes externally, considering that Middlebury has such vastly supported language programs in other departments. Middlebury should update its claim: it offers preeminent programs of **vocal** language, with a large gap where nonverbal languages like American Sign Language should exist.

HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

The Campus accepts submissions of opinions, reflections and letters to the editor from all members of our community, every week. Pieces from students, staff and faculty are all welcomed for consideration.

Email
llaesch@middlebury.edu
with submissions.

"MAKE YOUR OWN FUTURE": TRUSTING STUDENTS TO LEAD

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

Susanna Schatz

Middlebury students are often taught that the skills a Middlebury education fosters are ones that will prepare us to be leaders, to make our own informed decisions or to strike out on our own paths. The "Our Students" tab of the college's website even touts that Middlebury is home to students who want to "make [their] own future."

But even with a student body full of current and future leaders, the college rarely empowers students to shape the community they want to see. Instead, decisions that have a drastic impact on student life — some recent ones include changes to the schedule, a tuition increase and the club sports tier system — are made in meetings we are not invited to, based on information that is never shared with us and determined without broad input from those it will impact most. We often only learn an issue was ever up for discussion after it has already been decided.

Students need a voice in the future of the college. We want to see a cultural shift in the way Middlebury thinks about the decision-making process — one where administrators and other college employees with decision-making power proactively gather student feedback before major changes are set in stone.

The college has made efforts to make space for student voices in some cases. Some administrators hold office hours, work with Student Government Association (SGA) representatives or run ideas by the students they already know. While we appreciate these efforts, they are not solutions. Administrators' office hours are few and far between. Turnout for SGA elections is low — some students do not even know who their class representatives are — in part because students lack faith that the SGA has an impactful voice.

We feel that there is still a major disconnect between students and the administration; due to the nature of their jobs, administrators do not interact directly with students as frequently as faculty and many college staff members. But given that the administration holds nearly all the decision-making power at the college, we feel that there should be greater efforts to connect with students and seek out their feedback, constructive criticism and ideas.

We get that the college has to make tough decisions sometimes — including ones that students will not like. But if students are involved in those conversations from the start, they'll understand why the college had to make those decisions.

In general, we propose that existing feedback infrastructure be expanded. This could take the form of expanded and better-advertised office hours. It could also take the form of a centralized feedback form or regular open forum conversations. Every graduating senior receives a link to a required "post-graduation survey," a tool that collects student opinions and feedback on their college experience. We propose that this survey be offered to students after the completion of each of their years at Middlebury. This will allow the administration to gather more comprehensive information about the student experience over time and across classes that can hopefully help inform future policies.

While we do feel that faculty do a fairly good job of seeking out and incorporating student input when making decisions, we think there are a few places where this could be done more consistently. Many, but not all, departments have student advisory committees — ensuring that all departments have such a committee and that they have regular meetings or tasks could boost student engagement and afford students another opportunity to provide feedback.

Many of the college's biggest decisions — such as those about the comprehensive fee, new building projects and budget plans — are approved by the Board of Trustees. Decisions made by the Board impact current and future students, but many will go their entire Middlebury experience without ever speaking to a Board member. We feel there is certainly room for improvement in terms of contact between students and trustees — the bar is set pretty low. There are two student constituent advisors to the College Board of Advisors, but they are non-voting members, one of them is appointed by SGA and they only sit on that particular branch of the Board. The college recently announced plans to appoint a recent alum — a student who will have graduated at some point between 2019 and spring 2023 — to the Board. While this is a step in the right direction, can that alum really speak to the experiences of current students, especially if they graduated prior to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic? We feel that the college should consider increasing student representation within the Board of Trustees setting — perhaps allowing the student body to elect a student representative who could serve as a voting member.

Some members of our Editorial Board pointed out that when the college offers feedback opportunities, there is often low turnout or engagement. We think that some of this has to do with a lack of awareness about these opportunities, but we also believe much of this has to do with a culture surrounding student input. When students do not feel that their thoughts or ideas will genuinely be taken into account when the college makes decisions, they do not want to take the time to voice them.

But this goes both ways. If students want to be given a greater say in the decisions of the college, they need to respect the spaces they have access to already. And if opportunities for input do become more widely available, we urge students to participate.

Students care deeply about this institution. We believe that if students felt that the college truly valued their input, they would be more willing and excited to provide it.

In recent years, students have pushed for the college to divest from fossil fuels, raise wages for employees, offer tenure-track positions to beloved professors, bring back MiddView trips for first years, and, recently, switch over to a new bank for college purchasing cards. It's clear many students are invested in this college, even in the kinds of decisions that they could easily go four years choosing to overlook. Student input and advocacy has been integral in shaping the college's image as a leader in sustainability efforts among its peers — something that is a major part of the college's "brand." But in all these advocacy efforts, students have had to find a foothold in the issues while they were already ongoing. Imagine what it might look like if they were invited to the table from the outset.

Students may only be here for four years. But that doesn't mean we can't be invested in the college's future. If Middlebury students are indeed future leaders — then let them lead.

The little things in life that bring me joy

Notes from the Desk

***Sophia Afsar-Keshmiri** is an opinions editor and a member of the class of 2024*

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, I drag myself out of bed at 8 a.m. My eyes do not gracefully flutter open. Instead, I force them to lift what seems like pounds, until the pink decor that adorns my walls turns from sporadic blurs of color into the shapes of a carefully curated collection of photos, art and posters. Rolling over, I fumble around the top shelf of the cart that sits next to my bed in search of my phone, struggling to locate the source of the horrible noise that wakes me up each and every morning. There's a sense of relief when my hand finally hits the pink plastic of its case. Next, I violently throw my pink covers off of me. This is how my day begins.

At roughly 9 a.m, I arrive in Proctor, and begin to caffeinate. My eyelids continue to betray me. More than once I have considered laying down in a booth, but knowing the caffeine will eventually kick in, I fight the urge. I begin the futile task of finishing readings for the three classes that I have back to back on these days.

Two hours and four cups of Earl Grey tea later, I trade in my carabiner for a to-go container and make a "little kid" lunch — a ham and cheese sandwich, an apple, cucumber slices and whatever baked treat Proctor has to offer. A victim of what I hope is one day known at Middlebury as "the great lunch conundrum of 2023," I head off to my first of three classes that meet between 11:15 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. with only 15 minutes between each.

Needless to say, by the end of the day, I am exhausted.

Since the beginning of the semester, my Tuesday and Thursday routine has been the bane of my existence and, at times, has felt largely unsustainable. Don't get me wrong, I am a true Middlebury nerd; I love each class, and I need all three for my two majors, Economics and Art History, so this is a self-inflicted problem. But, I've had more than one moment where I've thought to myself, "what were you thinking?"

There's a resounding sentiment among students that this spring semester has felt particularly grueling so far. From what I've heard from friends, classmates and acquaintances, the stress I've internalized is being felt throughout the institution as a whole.

For weeks, I've been wondering how I am going to make the Tuesday-Thursday routine work. (Eventually, I will build a tolerance to the caffeine that is keeping me going.)

So I sought out solutions to make these days feel more manageable. This semester, I've begun a more positive habit that's made my Tuesdays and Thursdays significantly more enjoyable: I've been intentionally acknowledging all of the little things I am grateful for, especially during my busiest days.

Pink is my favorite color; so when I jolt awake from the sound of my alarm and am forced to accept that it is indeed time for me to leave my cozy bed, I find myself admiring the warmth that radiates from my walls. Being surrounded by a hue I associate with fun, happiness and laughter makes waking up more pleasant and welcoming.

And those four cups of Earl Grey? Although I stick to this flavor, I don't make each cup the same. I find joy in getting to choose a different concoction each time I leave my seat for another cup. Sometimes I opt for just honey or just cream, and sometimes I add both. One of my favorite additions to a piping hot cup of tea is a lemon wedge, which I just recently learned exists in the same fridge that holds the cream. This small discovery made my day.

My little kid lunch is definitely less than ideal, but because of it, I've noticed the kindness that exists on our campus. Figuring out the best way to pack it without a lunch box took some experimentation. One morning, rushing around Proctor and running late, I asked if there was any Saran wrap in the dining hall available to students. The dining staff was kind enough to spare some.

I have professors who have been equally understanding of the pinch some students like myself are in. Well before this semester, the Art History Department would offer students snacks at the beginning of class. However, aware that this might not just be a treat and is in fact a necessity for students who are rushing for a quick lunch, or unable to make it to the dining hall, they've become even more intentional about making this option available. The treats they bring are nearly gone by the end of class.

These are just some of the little things that bring me joy, even in the thick of my most stressful days. I would encourage anybody feeling stressed, anxious or worried to take the time to slow down and notice the little things that brighten your day. I think you'll find that they add up to a whole lot of happiness you didn't even realize was there.

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The Middlebury Campus

Conversations with custodians

By ANNALISE JOHNSON
Photojournalist

Lee Brouillard, on the job.

Brouillard cleans the sink surfaces with her yellow towel.

Brouillard animatedly uses her blue towel to clean the toilet.

The door to the Custodial Office on the basement level of Forest Residence hall was open when I walked past. I was drawn in after noticing posters and a colorful lei covering the walls. Soon after, the custodian working the hall entered, and I was enthusiastically greeted by a woman named Lee Brouillard.

Brouillard has been a Middlebury dining services staff member since 2012 and recently joined the custodial services team. She encouraged me to follow her as she went through her 11 a.m. routine, walking me through which towel to use when cleaning the toilet, and which to use when cleaning the mirrors.

Brouillard was already five hours into her day when I met up with her — she started at 6 a.m. Other custodians had started two hours earlier. Some shifts during Covid-19 had been moved to the early-morning hours to reduce interaction between students and custodial staff, meaning a start time of 4 a.m. was the new normal for some.

Sandra Laird is one of these early-morning workers, a long-time staff member at the college with seven years of experience on the custodial team.

"We have to be the eyes of the building," she told me. This means not only cleaning, but frequently checking for things that are missing and broken, checking fire extinguishers and changing light bulbs, and just being there for students who need help.

After twenty-one total years of experience as a Middlebury staff member, Laird's favorite building to work in has been Munroe Hall. She likes the movement of the students and interactions she has had with faculty members.

Liza Rheaume, another long-time staff member, started working for the college thirty-four years ago when her mother-in-law got her the job. She grew up here, attended Middlebury Union High School and eventually moved to Vergennes where her husband's job was located.

"The first building I ever was in was FIC (the Freeman International Center)," she said. "[The custodial job] looked a lot different then. We weren't teams. The FIC was the only space I was in." Now, her team of six works at the FIC, Atwater, Chateau, Wright Theatre, Sunderland and Warner Hall. Teams rotate between buildings everyday.

Rheaume commented on the persistent challenges Covid-19 has raised for custodial staffing and college staffing in general. Since the pandemic, the custodial staff have been asked to do extra work, despite a significant shortage in staff and decreased competitiveness in pay.

"In the past year, ... it has been hard for them to hire a lot of people," she said. "A lot of places around town have been offering more starting money, and Middlebury's pay isn't like it used to be. This used to be the place to work .... they still have great benefits, but some things have gone away."

As she sat with me on the lower-level of Chateau during her lunch break, referencing the notes she had taken in response to a few of my questions, she reflected on the family-like bond she had created with her teammates.

"They share the same experiences," she said. "I enjoy immensely working with the people that I work with."

While Rheaume plans on retiring in the next few years, she explained that focusing on being a caregiver to her 86-year-old mother was the only thing that would take her away from the job earlier.

Sitting around the break room table in the Ross complex, Cindy Webb and Lynn Eisler-Lebeau shared with me how their relationships with students are one of the most rewarding parts of their jobs. Webb has worked for Middlebury for 12 years, and Eisler-Lebeau has worked for 23 years.

"I can remember, the first time I had my own floor ... the first group of freshmen, I knew every single one of them. I knew their names, I knew where they were from, I knew what they were interested in," Webb said.

"It was a good community," she added. "I do what I do for students." She described that despite receiving gratitude from some students, it has been harder to create lasting connections since the pandemic and the accompanying shift in schedules.

Webb commented that earlier shifts to reduce interaction between students and custodial staff during Covid-19 could have set a precedent for the lack of student-custodial relationships within buildings. Eisler-Lebeau saw this change in relationships as potentially stemming from short-staffing.

"I don't know them by name like I used to," Eisler-Lebeau said. "If you were to ask me a bunch of these students' names now, I couldn't tell you because we don't have as much time as we used to. ... We are so short-handed."

Some staff also described how winter weather conditions can make it difficult to reach campus. "The winter challenges getting to work. Many of us live farther off campus and have to drive a distance to get here. I have one team member that drives all the way from Castleton — it can be a treacherous drive, but we do it," Rheaume said.

Once on campus, staff have faced other challenges this winter: cleaning up salt residue used on sidewalks and dealing with recent incidents of vandalism.

Within the last month, glass and dining hall dishes were smashed all the way down the sidewalk near Atwater. Vandalism in the Ross complex and frequent displacement of dining hall dishes has left custodians with a significant amount of extra work.

"We deal with a lot of aftermath from parties," said Sierra Lane, an employee of five years and a team liaison. Lane's father was also a Middlebury staff member, and she came to Middlebury after leaving her previous job to find one that treated its employees better.

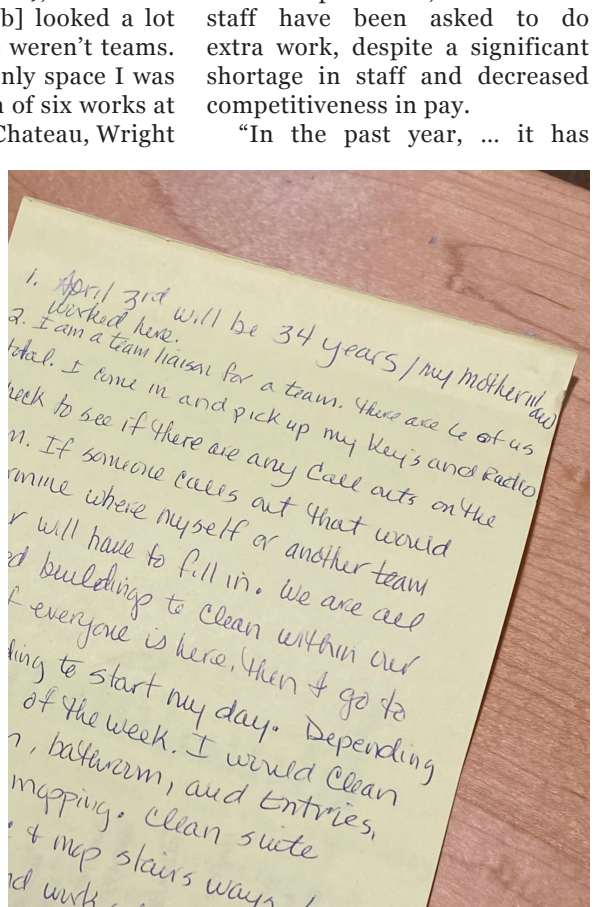
"A lot of students say thank you, which is really nice and goes a long way. I'm not totally used to it, but I'll be pulling trash, and they'll say, 'thank you,' and it means a lot," Lane said.

Lane has a positive outlook on her job when faced with frustrating situations. "If I see something negative, it usually is going to happen again," she said. "I try to tell myself, 'Well, I've dealt with this before, but what am I going to do this time?'"

Getting the chance to hear the stories of a few custodians on campus illuminated how essential the custodial staff is to student life. Having these conversations made it evident that the custodial staff are the backbone of the campus and have such a direct impact on student life. As custodians continue to have challenges with short-staffing and extended hours, a simple hello and thank you is more powerful than ever.

I want to thank Sandra Laird, Liza Rheaume, Cindy Webb, Lynn Eisler-Lebeau, Sierra Lane and Lee Brouillard for their willingness to share their stories, and the Middlebury custodial staff for all the work they do to care for students and the College.

Liza Rheaume, on lunch break in Chateau basement lounge.


Notes Rheaume prepared for our lunch conversation.

Sierra Lane, Custodial Liaison, on break.

PHOTOS BY ANNALISE JOHNSON

AND THE OSCAR GOES TO... A RECAP OF THE OSCAR AWARDS

By RYAN McELROY
News Editor

Courtesy Photo

Cast members from "Everything Everywhere All At Once" celebrate with their awards.

The Oscars took place last Sunday, March 12, crowning the mind-bending action sci-fi film "Everything Everywhere All At Once" this year's Best Picture. The film's astonishing seven wins were never guaranteed — it had faced relentless doubts about its awards chances since its debut last spring — but that only made its ultimate success all the more exciting to see.

To give you an idea of the magnitude of its victory, not only did "Everything Everywhere" shut out veteran filmmakers like Steven Spielbierg and Martin McDonagh, but it was also the first film to ever win three acting awards and Best Picture, and the first science fiction movie to ever win Best Picture. Now "Turn Down For What" is a music video directed by Oscar-winning directors. What a night.

Michelle Yeoh won Best Actress for her complex portrayal of Evelyn Wang, an unlikely hero and multiverse-traveling mother who captured the emotional heart of her movie. She won a nail-biter race against two-time winner Cate Blanchett, nominated for playing tortured conductor Lydia Tár, in a contest that pitted two tremendous performances against one another.

As the first Asian to win Best Actress, Yeoh represents her own several decades of work in the film industry, as well as the many other women of color who have been historically excluded from this category.

"For all the little boys and girls who look like me watching tonight, this is a beacon of hope and possibilities. This is proof that dreams do come true," Yeoh said during her acceptance speech.

As anticipated, Ke Huy Quan won Best Supporting Actor for his return to acting for the first time in 20 years in "Everything Everywhere All At Once." Although Barry Keoghan took the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) award for his comedic village loner in "The Banshees of Inisherin," Quan garnered universal acclaim and swept through the SAG, Critics Choice and Golden Globes with his astounding versatility and heartfelt speeches about his return to the film industry and persistence against adversity.

For previously snubbed actors, like actors Ke Huy Quan, Michelle Yeoh and Brendan Fraser, their wins this year represented the culmination of their careers and the long journeys throughout the film industry that brought them to the stage.

The Best Actor race has seen dramatic shifts in momentum this year. Front runner status constantly shifted between Austin Butler for his bombastic portrayal of Elvis, Brendan Fraser's emotional role in "The Whale" that captivated fall film festivals, and critics' favorite Colin Farrell's tragically goofy Irishman. Ultimately, the King of Rock 'n Roll was not victorious, as Fraser was crowned Best Actor. We'll never know if Butler would have given his victory speech in his real voice or the Elvis impression he appears to have permanently adopted.

The win for Fraser came after years of exclusion and disrespect in the film industry after speaking out about being sexually harassed by Philip Berk in 2003, who was then the president of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

"I started in this business 30 years ago and things didn't come easily to me, but there was a facility that I didn't appreciate at the time until it stopped," Fraser said in his acceptance speech.

Best Supporting Actress was a hard-fought race until the end, with Jamie Lee Curtis ultimately claiming the final award over Kerry Kondon and Angela Bassett for her portrayal of Deidre, a belligerent IRS agent in "Everything Everywhere All At Once." Who's to say what compelled the Academy to reward Curtis' performance: her brutally honest tax audits, the epic battles with Michelle Yeoh's character or the hot dog fingers?

Curtis' two main competitors had each claimed significant precursor awards, but the wave of passion for "Everything Everywhere" (as well as the industry respect for her long career) was enough to turn this first nomination into a win.

Best Original Screenplay, a category that featured a nomination for the biting Irish humor of the "Banshees of Inisherin," also went to "Everything Everywhere All At Once." Best Adapted Screenplay rewarded "Women Talking" for its poignant discussions by Mennonite women about the violence perpetrated by the men in their community.

The craft categories delivered some of the most surprising upsets of the night. Netflix's chilling adaption of "All Quiet on the Western Front" managed to win both Best Score and Best Production Design over the extravagantly produced "Babylon" by "La La Land" director Damien Chazelle.

The movie also captured Best Cinematography after "Top Gun: Maverick"'s surprising nomination snub back in January, as well as taking Best International Feature Film for Germany. "All Quiet on the Western Front" deservedly won for its hauntingly beautiful depiction of World War I played out across snowy forests and battlefields blanketed in artillery fire.

The only film that could have challenged "All Quiet"'s victory for International Film was 3-hour blockbuster "RRR," but India declined to submit the film for contention in that category. "RRR" still managed to claim the award for Best Song for "Naatu Naatu" over Rihanna, Lady Gaga and Mitski.

The genuine depiction of an Asian family struggling to connect across generations and multiverses in "Everything Everywhere All At Once" was beloved enough to sweep through the Oscars this year. This year's award season and its monumental comebacks for the individuals and movies themselves could mean we have entered a new era in cinema. Out of all the universes out there, let's hope we really do live in the one where creativity is rewarded, movies can get weird and the Oscars actually recognize the best work of the year.

Songs and Arias: Showcasing Vocal Talent at the College

By TIFFANY LI
Staff Writer

Courtesy of Carol Christensen

Sebastina Holbrook '26, Blair Jia '23, Rohini Prabhakar '23, and Urian Vasquez '25, accompanied by Cynthia Huard.

Students and faculty alike gathered in Robison Hall on March 11 to watch "Songs and Arias," a classical vocal concert by advanced voice students at Middlebury. Sebastian Holbrook '26, Blair Jia '23, Rohini Prabhakar '23 and Urian Vasquez '25 each sang a selection of songs, arias and duets. Middlebury Affiliate Artist Cynthia Huard provided accompaniment on the piano. The concert also included performances from special guest and alumnus Tevan Goldberg '18.

As guests streamed through the door, they were handed programs with lyrics translated from Italian, Spanish, German and French. The concert showcased an incredible variety of emotional stories — everything from dramatic love at first sight, to a prayer to the moon goddess, to an ode to New York, was expressed through the students' vocal performances.

The concert was the culmination of students' work over the semester. Carol Christensen, voice teacher to the performing students, organizes the Songs and Arias concert every March, which typically involves four to eight students.

"The students chosen to sing excel in this genre and love the classical repertoire, spending many hours practicing what we call a 'set' of songs, perfecting three to four songs each for the program," Christensen said.

"Many of the classical songs are in foreign languages, so we spend time on proper pronunciation and the translation. At Middlebury, of course, many students are quite skilled in various languages, which is a huge plus in the study of voice," Christensen added.

Vasquez, who has been studying vocal performance since fifth grade, highlighted the importance of telling a story with a performance rather than simply aiming for technical excellence. "It's not just about getting the notes right or making sure that you know what you're saying," he said. "It's getting the story across. Even if your audience doesn't know the language, you want to make sure that they can get the sentiment of what you're singing through the way that you express yourself."

In addition to his individual songs, Vasquez sang one duet with Holbrook, "We're Called Gondolieri," from Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Gondoliers."

"Music for me has always been one of the biggest parts of my life. I started singing in a choir when I was very young, and I loved it. In high school, I realized that I wanted to refine my technique and do new solo repertoire, so I had a voice teacher through high school. When I got to Midd, I knew this was something that I wanted to continue," Holbrook said.

Holbrook expressed appreciation for the supportive environment among voice students at Middlebury. "I think what's really special about voice lessons and music in general in college is the community around it. Me and the three other students [in the concert] — we all get along very well. We enjoy supporting each other," Holbrook said.

In preparing for a performance, students choose songs to learn, practice and refine. After practicing on their own, students rehearse with accompaniment and duet partners.

"The process starts prior to the start of each semester as I go about choosing the repertoire I think will be best for each student's vocal development. Students are also welcome to bring in pieces they are interested in singing," Christensen said. "In both the classical and 'popular' genres, we explore the meaning of the text, what the composer adds to it, and how to best communicate the student's interpretation of the text to an audience."

Speaking about the role of music in his future, Vasquez mentioned wanting to compose music in addition to performing. "I'm a music and theater joint major, so I really want to write something for performance, whether or not I am a part of that performance. I'm really into more musical theater aspects — telling the story through the stage, and through music just by itself, even without the voice," Vasquez said.

Holbrook, meanwhile, said he wouldn't necessarily want a career in music. "Will I do [music] in some capacity? Absolutely. There's no doubt in my mind," he said. "But it is not my goal right now to continue music as a vocation after college."

Christensen has been teaching vocal performance at Middlebury since 1991. According to her, she has maintained close relationships with her students even after they graduate.

"I love the collaboration in making beautiful and inspiring music with them," Christensen said. "It is really a joy. I love experiencing their progress with them."

OSCARS FASHION 2023: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NOT-SO-RED CARPET

By MAGGIE BRYAN
Arts & Culture Editor

Courtesy Photos

Rhianna (left) and Florence Pugh (right) at the Oscars.

This Sunday, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences presented its 95th Academy Awards. At first glance, the Oscars are a platform to award the bests of the film industry. But the Oscars' guise is weak. Despite many changes made by The Academy this year, including the addition of a "crisis team," changes to the dress code and the first non-red carpet since 1961, one thing has stayed the same: The Academy Awards are a showcase for high fashion, with any acknowledgment of cinema as an afterthought. And as stars walked the red, (for this year's purposes, champagne) carpet this past Sunday, the focus was not on who won what, but rather who wore what. The answer to both questions is everything, everywhere, all at once.

The unveiling of the carpet set the tone for the night. According to Lisa Love, leader of the creative team, the "beautiful sienna, saffron color" of the carpet was chosen to evoke the sunset before a golden hour. Dreams of a warm orange glow quickly disappeared when the carpet unfurled to reveal a depressing shade of tan or champagne (at best). By the time the first handful of celebrity shoes had muddied the carpet, those dreams were long gone.

The color of the carpet this year may have been new, but clothing adhered to traditional palettes. Dominating the champagne carpet were suits and gowns of black and white, typical of the Oscars, sparkled with shimmery silvers and grays. Beige doesn't compliment black and white nearly as well as red does, yet designers weren't afraid to stick to tradition, and it worked. Harry Shum Jr. of "Everything Everywhere All At Once" showed up in a white, overlapping chef-style tuxedo with dark trim, reminiscent of his role in the film. His look was tied together with a wide, sash-like belt, offering a dapper fusion of Eastern and Western fashion as an acknowledgment of Shum's Chinese heritage.

Of the black and white looks, Rihanna's was a clear standout. The nominee for Best Original Song started her night in a brownish-black, leather-mesh ensemble by Alaïa, reminiscent of her Super Bowl halftime look from last month by the same designer. Rihanna performed her song "Lift Me Up" from "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever," but not before changing into her second look, a custom Maison Margiela black bra and pants set draped with beading. The singer's first two darker looks were contrasted with her final outfit of the night, which included a turquoise custom Bottega Veneta buster, skirt and shearling stole.

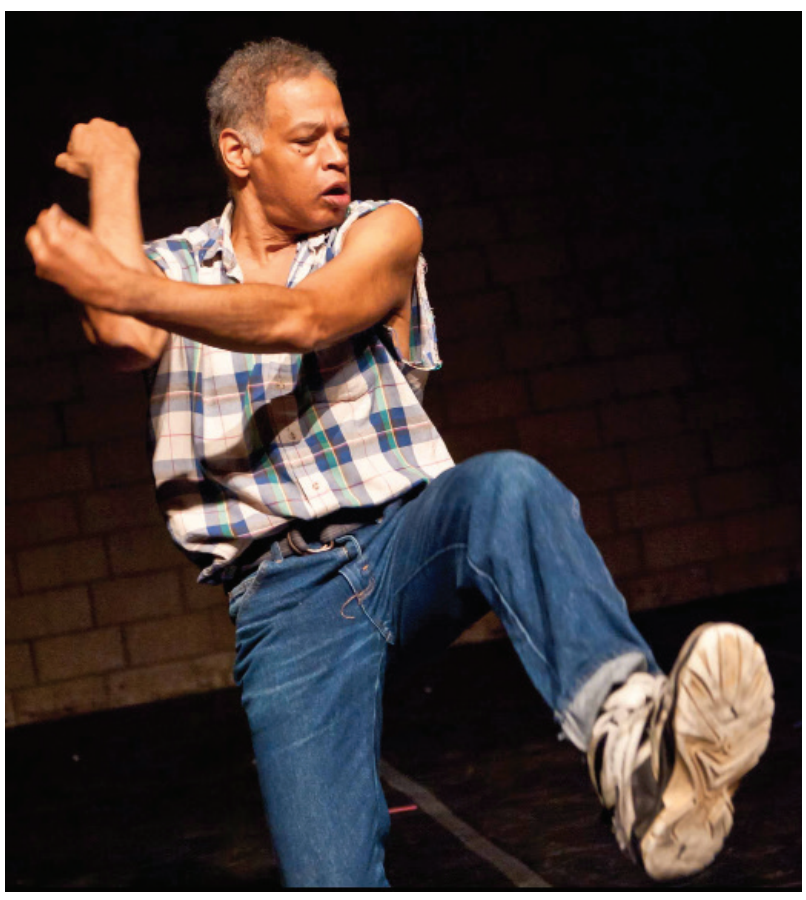
While some played it safe in black and white, one resounding theme seemed to be an homage to disco balls and duvet covers. For many critics, the heavy, draped and curtain-esque fabrics were the downfall of the night. Yet, from Cara Delevigne's beloved deep red Elie Saab old Hollywood gown to Florence Pugh's Twitter-ridiculed edgy off-the-shoulder Valentino gown (with shorts peeking out), heavy fabrics offered a refreshing new texture to accompany the champagne carpet.

On the other end of the spectrum, several stars opted for more delicate looks, trading heavy stiff fabrics for shiny silk and satin embellished with sequins and beading. Actresses Ana de Armas and Zoe Saldaña each wore sleek, sleeveless, shimmering, neutral gowns from Louis Vuitton and Fendi, both of which have been compared to wedding dresses. Two of the night's most talked about looks combined shimmering embellishments with voluminous sheet-like layers. Allison Williams of "M3GAN" was the topic of much conversation, in a pinkish gray floral long-sleeve Giambattista Valli gown, complete with an oversized, baby pink pleated cape train. In a similar combination, Fan Bingbing shined in a silver halter dress with dramatic puffy green sleeves and a matching cape.

Like the carpet itself, many stars and designers exceeded in steering away from tradition. But while much has changed during the Oscars' 95-year history, film and fashion will forever complement one another. There's no denying the importance of walking the carpet, whatever color, as a means of experimentation and expression.

EMBRACING THE AWKWARD WITH ISHMAEL HOUSTON-JONES

By JOSHUA GLUCKSMAN
Staff Writer



Courtesy Photo

Ishmael Houston-Jones cultivating the art of dance.

Dozens of students, staff, faculty and community members gathered in a circle in the Dance Theatre of the Mahaney Arts Center on Wednesday, March 9, stretching and waiting as light, upbeat music filled the room. Visiting Assistant Professor of Dance Lida Winfield entered and introduced the event, the first of a multi-part series entitled "Movement Matters: Global Body in Conflict." Winfield explained these new events as part of a recent grant given to the Dance Department on behalf of the funding from the Kathryn Wasserman Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation.

"Dance has always been about conflict and always about transformation, but rarely have both been put together," Winfield said.

The grant has allowed the department to hire several artists in residence, who offer master classes and lunch talks, and meet with students and staff to learn about creative problem-solving. Although it might seem unconventional, dance provides an ideal avenue to explore conflict-related goals such as talking across differences and creating competency and awareness. This series of events is intended to produce a comfortable yet challenging space to invite in complexity and personal experience.

Picture sitting on the floor with 50 strangers who are all kindly looking at you and saying your name in unison right after you introduce yourself. After having done too many introductions to count during my time at Middlebury, I have grown skeptical of how welcoming they can actually be, especially in a large group. For this reason, I was pleasantly surprised that such a small change as having the whole group parrot back your name in unison could turn what often feels like a cold formality into a warm, welcoming embrace. If there's anyone who could have led such an inclusive and welcoming type of introduction for a dance event about conflict and movement, it is Ishmael Houston-Jones.

The dancing began shortly after Houston-Jones, the first guest artist to come to Middlebury under this new structure and funding, entered the dance space. Houston-Jones, best known for his choreography, teaching and improvisational dance, got the movement started quickly by having us walk around. Students began milling around a relatively small dance floor and navigating the space, while being mindful not to bump into anyone else. It was difficult, and, to make matters worse, the next instruction was to start randomly changing direction every couple of steps. For me, a 6'2", relatively uncoordinated and inexperienced dancer, walking in this way led to bumping into others and required a lot of self-awareness. The next step was to intentionally brush up and bump into others. I was quite skeptical of this being a comfortable experience, but I slowly started to understand the non-verbal, subtle ways of communicating by using eye contact and reacting to, and listening to, people's body language. Through the fleeting glances into the eyes of others and gentle brushing of shoulders, I even felt like I was starting to "get to know" some of the other dancers, without having ever met them before the workshop.

The next step of the workshop was even harder. After a slight brush or contact, we were encouraged to stay connected physically to whomever we ran into for a few seconds. Initially, I was quite nervous for this step, because it meant sharing the direction and pressure of touch with a stranger and negotiating that commitment in real-time. This led to several off-balance and awkward stumbling moments. Yet, in other moments, I was able to explore some ways of moving that felt really freeing. By this time, I had put some of my self-consciousness to the side and suspended my disbelief as we moved into the main contact improvisation exercises.

Sasha Wintersteller '26.5, Mark McGoey '26.5 and Simon Leiderman '26.5 attended the workshop, inspired by the same kinds of improvisational techniques that they are learning about in their first-year seminar, Collaborating Across the Arts. From this class, all three of them seemed used to discussing the emotions that come up in a setting like this. Wintersteller and McGoey were partners in an activity where one partner, with eyes closed, is led by the other, and they both reflected on some of the challenging and easy parts of an exercise like this that requires immense trust and courage. "I was kind of stressed about not bumping into walls and other groups, but I also really appreciated the chance to take a risk," McGoey said.

McGoey's sentiment matches with one of Houston-Jones's most repeated goals of the whole activity, which was to "embrace the awkward." Unlike me, others did not necessarily feel the awkwardness, but they appreciated the challenging aspects of moving with people in novel ways. "For me, I felt comfortable, but [I] would be excited to bring this feeling of vulnerability into my everyday life," Wintersteller reflected.

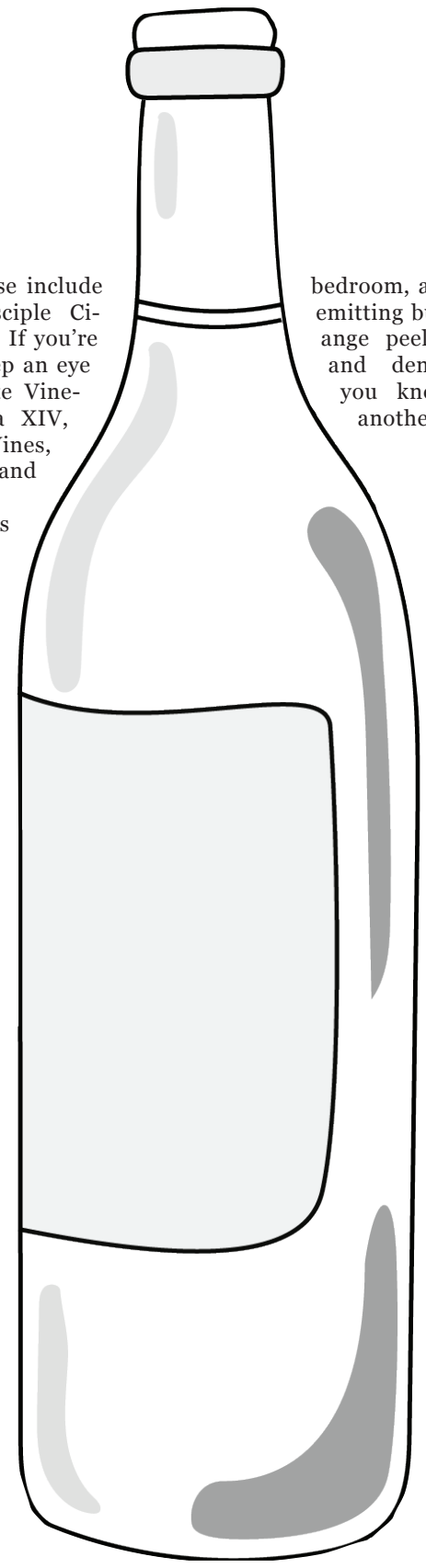
"I feel less comfortable outside of a dance class, but also wish I could take some of that risk more often," Leiderman echoed.

My partner for the same activity was Lisandra Tusen '26, who had been on a competitive salsa team for five years. Through that type of dance, Tusen was used to working with inexperienced dancers, and she reflected on what it meant to share leadership across skill levels. I wanted to hear whether she saw a link between this shared experience and some of the challenges of a world with conflict.

"Dance is a beautiful way to find connections between people you don't know, which is really important because we live in a scary world, and I really felt that energy," she said.

The next Movement Matters: Global Body in Conflict visiting artist is Jumatatu Poe, who will be visiting and leading a lecture Tuesday, March 28 and a workshop Wednesday, March 29. Find out more at go/dance.

Slipin Sips: Wine? In Vermont? Who would've thought!



BY SAM LIPIN
Local Editor

"Slipin Sips" is a bi-weekly wine column written by Local Editor Sam Lipin (hence the title, "Slipin"). As an amateur sommelier, Sam exists deep in the world of wine, particularly natural wine, and this column seeks to share the joy he finds in fermented grapes with the rest of the world.

In the last edition of "Slipin Sips," I gave a brief introduction to the world of natural wine, a recent movement that technically started in the French wine region of Beaujolais in the 70s (say some), but really it has been going on for 8,000 years. Before we dip our toes into the international world of natural wine, it only makes sense to start with those from our own brave little state. It's important to give these wines the spotlight they deserve. Vermont wines have been written off for too long, detractors citing their monotoned juiciness and "foxiness," a musty aromatic trait associated with North American grape varieties. However, thanks to a select ever-growing number of producers seeking to unleash the full potential of Vermont wines, these wines are sullied no more. It's about time you learn about them.

Renowned natural wine writer Alice Feiring calls cold Vermont's viniculture a "vigneronne's avocation," and it's not difficult to see why. These wines are unique for two main reasons: the harsh climate from which they come and the use of hybrid grapes in their creation. Vines perform best when the terroir has a healthy balance of cold and heat, rain and sun, moisture and dryness. Grapes struggle to grow where consistent frosts freeze and destroy the budding fruits and leaves, as well as where the burning sun crisps the same buds and leaves behind damaged, shriveled berries. Vermont's environment belongs in the former category, and thus successful, chemical-free viticulture requires a ton of hands-on work. With that being said, Vermont possesses a useful tool to further combat the climate: cold-hardy grape varietals called hybrids.

Unlike "crosses" — varietals crossed from the same species of grape — "hybrids" are the result of interspecies breeding between vitis vinifera, the European fine wine species (think Pinot Noir, Riesling, Chardonnay, etc.), and other species of grape, such as vitis labrusca or vitis riparia — the kinds of eating grapes you'd buy at the grocery store. These hybrids were, for the most part, developed at Cornell University and the University of Minnesota, whose viticulture programs include controlled breeding procedures to create these gems.

A few hybrid grapes you should know: Marquette, a grandchild of Pinot Noir; La Crescent, a high acid, high sugar white; Frontenac Noir, a more tannic red variety; and Seyval blanc, perfect for bubbles on a hot summer day. These hybrids are utilized most in the Northeast and Canada, where growing conditions are extreme but are aided by neighboring bodies of water that warm up the vines during the winter and cool them down in the summer. Lake Champlain provides that aid in Vermont, with most vines being planted in the Lake Champlain Valley, where they are bordered and protected to the east by the Green Mountains.

Now, onto the producers. Viniculture has been occurring here for generations, mostly for quantity rather than quality. But in the past 10 years, Vermont has seen an insurgence of natural wine growers committed to making wine without the inclusion of additives or the chemical degradation of the vines and soil. Vermont is one of the fastest-growing wine regions in the United States, and a select few juices have even made their way over to Europe (give it a try, Parisians!).

Deirdre Heekin '86 of La Garagista Farm + Winery has long been hailed the pioneer of Vermont natural wine, setting the stage and serving as a mentor for those devoted to the same quest. Ever since she began making fermented beverages — yes, ciders too — she has done so organically and biodynamically, with absolutely nothing added in the cellar, not even sulfites. At first, the wines served as a side project for Heekin and her husband's restaurant, Pane e Salute, but after years of experimentation, they decided to close their restaurant and turn their focus solely to grapes (and other fruits). She now has a team of proteges with whom she works, allowing them to utilize her cellar and often her vineyards to make their own wines; these include La Montañuela, Disciple Cider and Lilith Wines. If you're looking for more, keep an eye out for Ellison Estate Vineyards, Kalchē, Stella XIV, Iapetus, Chertok Wines, Wildbranch Cider and NOK Vino (NH).

What I drank this week: Ellison Estate Vineyards' Kendra Knapik and her husband Rob farm a 50-acre plot on the eastern slopes of the Grand Isle, with 10-acres of some of the oldest vines in Vermont. From the outset, with the encouragement of Heekin, Knapik has farmed organically and biodynamically, keeping close the tenets of regenerative agriculture in her processes. As such, Knapik considers her large and ever-growing herd of sheep integral to her process; they stomp, eat and, most importantly, fertilize. This week, I drank the "Chicory, Thistle & Lace" 2021 blend of Louise Swenson, Prairie Star and La Crescent (of course, all hybrids). Pale gold and light-medium in body, this wine shouts and then recedes back into its bedroom, all while emitting burnt orange peel fumes and demanding you knock for another sip.

From the Archives: Women's History at Middlebury College

By RACHEL LU
Editor at Large

"From the Archives" is an opportunity for various writers to visit the Middlebury Special Collections and write about a different artifact each week. The Special Collections boasts hundreds of thousands of historic items, and through this column we encourage writers to explore not only the college's history, but also the history of the world around us.

"The constituents of a sound education are first, character — second, culture — third, critical power. (Including accuracy and sympathy with the various ages, nationalities and modes of men.) and fourth, — power to work hard under rule and pressure."

May Belle Chellis '86 — 1886, that is — the first female graduate of Middlebury College, wrote the above in a letter on the value of a college education nearly 40 years after graduating.

During this March — Women's History Month — as the snow seems to bury any motivation to study for that mid-term exam looming ahead, The Campus invites its readers to reflect on the value of a college education through the women who fought to be here and learn among the men.

Chellis transferred as a sophomore from Mt. Holyoke College in 1883 and joined a cohort of two other female students, May Anna Bolton '87 and Louise Hagar Edgerton. Bolton, whose father was a custodian at the college, had applied in the spring of 1882 but was denied by the trustees. Given the state of the college's funds, buildings and the corps of instructors, the board believed admitting female students would adversely impact the college's endowment.

By the fall of 1883, enrollment at the college was down to 38 students total, and the trustees finally gave in and opened up the admission process to women. This decision, however, did not mean the female students gained full and equal membership in the community. One example of such inequities was that there were no dorms for women on campus. Chellis therefore lived with Bolton's family in the house that is now the Franklin Environmental Center at Hillcrest. It was also up to the women of the college to fundraise for and furnish a study room for themselves on campus.

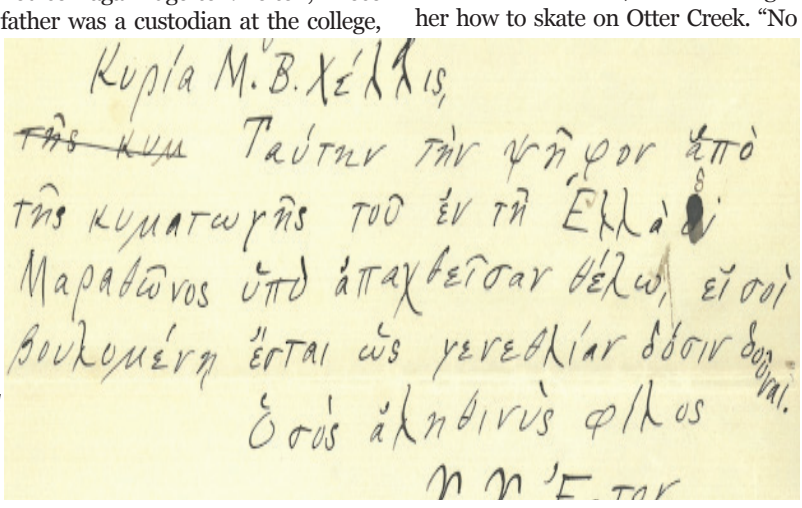
"It was great fun for us three girls of the Freshman class to furnish a study room in the Old Chapel building. Our friends gave us twenty five dollars, some chairs and a mirror," Chellis wrote. "We atoned for our high priced wallpaper by papering the room ourselves (except the ceiling)."

The faculty also held lower standards for women at the start, but the female students at the time pushed back.

"The faculty were not going to require us to do the regular Rhetorical work that the boys had, but we three insisted that we ought to do it just the same," wrote Chellis.

To nobody's surprise today, Chellis excelled in all of her classes, even receiving the $5.00 gold piece prize for the highest rank in Greek. Chellis fondly recalls a personal and close relationship with her Greek professor, William Wells Eaton, who also taught her how to skate on Otter Creek. "No matter how wildly my skates moved, he was never tripped," she reminisced.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MIDDLEBURY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS


Κυρία Μ. Β. Χέλλις,
Ταύτην τὴν ψῆφον ἀπὸ
τῆς κυματωγῆς τοῦ ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι
Μαραθῶνος ὑπὸ ἀπαχθεῖσαν θέλω, εἰ σοὶ
βουλομένῃ ἔσται ὡς γενεθλίαν δόσιν δοῦναι.
Ὁ σὸς ἀληθινὸς φίλος

Eaton's letter in Greek.

Chellis also included a treasured letter that Professor Eaton sent her, along with a little pebble he picked up at the shore of Marathon in Greece. Here is the letter in Greek (The Campus asks readers of Greek to offer a translation).

During her time at Middlebury, Chellis also taught at the Black River Academy in Ludlow, Vt. She eventually graduated from Middlebury with honors, and began an illustrious career as a teacher in Minnesota and Nebraska. Chellis was also a member of the League of Women Voters.

Chellis ended her reflection letter with a metaphor that aptly describes the transformative experience of a college education, one that she helped build and advocate for herself.

"Without an intelligent conception of what has gone before, a man today was no more than a grub burrowing aimlessly in the unilluminated earth, feeding on mud with all the glories of the real world lying concealed above him…" Chellis wrote, "And four short years would have taken him out of the earth and given him wings."

So ladies, find your wings this March, and soar from the earth…

PADDLE TENNIS & PICKLEBALL: RACKET SPORTS SPREAD ON MIDDLEBURY'S CAMPUS

By JACK McGUIRE
Senior Sports Editor

Pickleball and paddle sports are rapidly growing in popularity throughout the U.S. In the past three years, the number of pickleball players alone in the U.S. grew by 159%, according to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association. Middlebury has not been an exception to this trend. Racket sports like pickleball and paddle tennis have exploded in popularity across Middlebury's campus, and across the campus, students and the college have created opportunities for the Middlebury community to get their racket sports fix.

Pickleball is relatively easy for Middlebury students to play on campus — the college even offered a pickleball P.E. course over J-Term. This winter, the pickleball class, which Head Men's Tennis Coach Andrew Thomson '10 taught, met for an hour two times a week. The class met up at the two pickleball courts that college has created on the far side of Nelson Arena; one of them is on one of the tennis courts while the other is by the badminton courts.

For Middlebury students, the proliferation of pickleball around the U.S. and easy-to-learn nature of the game led to demand for the class.

"I've seen pickleball courts kind of around the area where I live, and when my family went on vacation, you just kind of see them sprouting up all over the place," said Josh Harkins '25, who took the pickleball class over J-Term. "I don't have a great background in racket sports, but I've played some racket sports before, and so it seemed like it was something where I might have a baseline of knowledge and skill."

After taking the class, students were excited to share the sport with friends and continue to sharpen their pickleball skills beyond J-Term.

"All in all, pickleball is definitely something that I'm gonna continue to work on," Harkins said. "I've been looking at tournaments to enter into, so it is definitely something that I hope to continue to do."

For students who want to play a racket sport that is closer to the game of tennis, Middlebury has an intramural paddle tennis league that was started this year. Throughout the winter, the teams in the league have played every week on Middlebury's paddle tennis courts right outside the fitness center. The courts have lights and heated floors, allowing students to play in almost all weather conditions.

Courtesy of Max Myers

Middlebury students take part in the intramural paddle tennis league.

Max Myers '25.5, the commissioner of the paddle tennis league, has jumpstarted its organization. Myers, who played paddle tennis with his grandfather growing up, was looking for opportunities to continue playing on campus. When he realized there was already an intramural paddle tennis league, he jumped at the chance to work with the sport he loved.

"I was really stressed at first and had no idea what I was doing. It took a lot of kinks to get through and a lot of snow, but it was a great season, and people were happy with it," Myers said.

Myers hopes that through the league, he can grow the sport and make paddle tennis more accessible to people across campus.

"Some people say Middlebury College is a country club, but it's an academic institution, and people have the right to play paddle tennis," Myers said.

PFL Weekly

By BLAISE SIEFER, ELI DIBARI, MARCO FENGLER, CAPTAIN RUDOLPH
Podcast Hosts

On our last episode before spring break, women's alpine skier Sofia Yubero '22.5 joins the show. The conversation takes an interesting spin to bungee jumping. Women's tennis demonstrates why the NESCAC is the most dominant conference in the country, and Marco knocks on wood after Blaise makes a bold statement about men's lacrosse. Captain presents this week's Panther All-Star, and it features a former walk-on who is now stealing headlines. Finally, you won't want to miss the women's lacrosse game on Thursday before heading out for spring break!

Weekend Recap: How did the Panthers do?

By RYAN HEINZERLING
Sports Editor

With March break around the corner, the spring sports season is picking up steam. Here's a quick recap of Middlebury sports teams' performances from over the weekend:

Nordic Skiing

Nordic skiing competed in the NCAA Championships this past weekend at Lake Placid, N.Y. The team placed 10th out of 22 schools again, finishing in the same position as last year's NCAA Championships. Shea Brams '26 came in 13th overall in the women's 20k classic, posting a 1:03:22.8 time, with Charlotte Ogden '23 not far behind in 18th with a time of 1:04:46.6. The women's side put up 32 points, putting them at seventh out of 17 teams. On the men's side, brothers Logan Moore '25 and Willson Moore '23 finished back to back in 15th and 16th place in the 20k classic with times of 58:18.8 and 58:30.4, respectively. Jack Christner '25 also threw down a point scoring race with a time of 1:01:16.6, which put him in 28th place. Those performances helped the men get 37 points for an eighth place finish. The Panthers as a whole team earned 215 points, well behind championship leaders Utah (526 points), Colorado (491.5 points) and Denver (416.5 points).

Women's Tennis

The women's tennis team beat Tufts, the eighth ranked team in the country, 5–4 in a close match on Saturday. Middlebury, ranked sixth in the country, won due to impressive efforts from Amy Delman '24, Claudia Miller '25, Nathalie van der Reis '25 and Lulu Wu '26. On Sunday, the team dominated in an 8–1 trouncing of Bates. Middlebury went 2–1 during the doubles portion of the event and undefeated in the singles portion, with Wu, van der Reis and Miller contributing again in the huge victory. The Panthers look to keep the winning streak alive next Saturday versus Chapman University.

Men's Tennis

The men's tennis team, ranked fourth in the country, had a mixed bag this weekend as they lost to the fifth ranked Tufts 6–3 on Saturday but came back to defeat Bates 7–2 on Sunday. Against Tufts, the Panthers put themselves in a hole early, losing all three doubles matches before Julian Wu '26 gave the Panthers their first win in his singles match. The next matches were very competitive until Tufts ultimately clinched their victory. On Sunday, the Panthers went 2–1 in the doubles event to creep ahead of Bates before going 5–1 in the singles matches. Wu won another match to give him eleven victories in a row. The Panthers will head to San Diego next weekend to play Point Loma College.

Men's Lacrosse

The men's lacrosse team had a big weekend, winning both of their games to improve to 3–0 this season. Saturday saw the Panthers beat Connecticut College 10–9. In the first quarter, the Panthers scored quickly to grab the 4–1 lead. The second quarter seemed to have all the action as Russell Thorndike '25 scored a hat trick to make it 6–2 before the Camels scored four straight goals to even up the game at six. William Ryan '23 scored with only 19 seconds left to give the Panthers a 7–6 lead going into halftime. The second half was low scoring, as each side scored three goals to finish off the game. Despite the back and forth, Middlebury has dominated Connecticut College to the tune of a 30–6 all time. On Sunday, Middlebury faced a much more daunting task as they fell behind RPI 5–0, but strong second and fourth quarter scoring (five goals and four goals respectively) sealed the Panthers' second 10–9 win of the weekend, and the RPI Engineers' first loss of the year. Tom Conley '23.5 gave the team the necessary heroics this time with the winning goal with only 36.9 seconds left in the game. Hayden Kern '26 also kept the Panthers in the hunt with 14 saves. Next Saturday, Middlebury looks to continue their win streak at home against Trinity.

Courtesy of Will Costello

Kelcey Dion '25 scored a hat trick in the women's lacrosse team's 19–3 win over Connecticut College.

Women's Lacrosse

The top-ranked women's lacrosse team absolutely demolished Connecticut College in a 19–3 victory this past Saturday. The game started with a high-scoring first quarter as Middlebury scored 10 goals to secure their victory early. Everyone got in on the fun as Jane Earley '23, Susan Rowley '24, Emma Inouye '23.5, Caroline Messer '26 and Kelcey Dion '25 all scored. The offensive tirade continued with another four goals in the second quarter to make it 14–2. Jamee Numan '25 scored two goals in the third quarter and another in the fourth to earn a hat trick, the second in her career. The offensive barrage was nothing new for Middlebury, who have historically beaten Connecticut College 31 out of 32 meetings. With this win, the team improves to 3–0 on the year (with an eight-game win streak dating to last season) and look to continue their almost comical offensive dominance this season on Wednesday at Peter Kohn Field versus St. Lawrence University.

Women's Ice Hockey

The seventh ranked women's ice hockey team ended their season on Saturday with a 4–2 loss in the NCAA Quarterfinals against Plattsburgh State, the No. 2 seed in the tournament. Plattsburgh got the scoring started early taking a 1–0 lead two minutes into the game. Claudia Vira '23 evened the game during a power play, but Middlebury wouldn't score again until the third period. Plattsburgh scored twice in the second period and never looked back. Britt Nawrocki '26 got the Panthers closer in the third period to make it 3–2, but Plattsburgh scored again to seal the deal on the Panthers' season. Despite the loss, individual performances like Sophia Merageas '24 saving 33 goals, a season high for her, showcased the talent on the team. This season marked the 18th time Middlebury made the NCAA tournament, and the program boasts a 21–14 lifetime record in the tournament, good for second best among DIII schools.

Baseball

In the Campus' preseason recap story, the baseball team's main dynamic was their historically productive offense coupled with a more league average pitching staff. Well, that staff demonstrated impressive stuff on Sunday as they held Swarthmore to four runs over 14 innings in their doubleheader. Game one saw Alex Price '23 duel his Swarthmore counterpart Liam Alpern for the first four scoreless innings before the game opened up in the sixth inning. Swarthmore took a 1–0 lead with a homer off Price, but Middlebury answered with four runs in the next frame, highlighted by a three-run homer by Kyle McCausland '25. Price finished off the game despite an RBI double by Swarthmore in the bottom of the seventh, racking up a total of nine strikeouts in his effort. Game two saw the Panthers break out offensively to dominate Swarthmore 9–2. The first inning saw each team trade off runs. RBI singles by David Byrne '24 and Baker Angstman '24 in the second inning gave the Panthers the lead for good but not before a five-run explosion in the seventh inning thanks to a Jack Stopler '23 RBI single and a grand slam by Bryne. With the sweep, the Panthers head to California for spring break with their first game against Chapman University.

Members of women's track team compete at NCAA Indoor Championships

Courtesy of John Kenny

The women's distance medley relay team poses after their sixth place finish.

By JACK McGUIRE
Senior Sports Editor

This past weekend, select members of the women's track team competed at the NCAA Indoor Championships in Winston-Salem, N.C.

The women's distance medley relay (DMR) team of Kate Kenny '23, Michelle Louie '24, Audrey Grimes '23 and Ciara Dale '24 earned All-American honors after coming in sixth place in their event with a time of 11:46.36. Meanwhile, Emily Rubio '26 finished in 12th place overall in the pentathlon event with 3,365 points.

In the DMR, four different athletes each run a unique distance in a relay race. The race includes a 1,200-meter leg, a 400-meter leg, an 800-meter leg and a 1-mile leg. Grimes ran a 3:37.65 in the 1,200 meter, Louie ran a 57.58 in the 400 meter, Dale ran a 2:15.60 in the 800 meter and Kenny ran a 4:55.52 in the mile.

Middlebury has historically been very successful in the women's DMR event. The Panthers won the event in 2012 and have had 10 teams earn All-American honors, which goes to the top performers at NCAA national championships. Louie also earned All-American honors on the women's DMR last year.

The women's DMR team secured a spot at the NCAA Championships after coming in first place at the Division III New England Championships with a time of 12:00.21. The team is becoming faster and stronger, as their national championship performance was almost 14 seconds faster than their time at the regional championships. The DMR team will hopefully only get stronger as the spring season continues.

While the women's DMR team is mostly seasoned upperclassmen, Rubio, a first-year, also excelled at the NCAA Indoor Championships. Rubio is the first athlete since 2017 to represent Middlebury at the NCAA Championship level in the pentathlon, an event that includes the 60 meter hurdles, high jump, the 800 meter run, long jump and shot put. Throughout the five events, Rubio performed best in the high jump, where she finished in fifth place with a height of 1.61 meters.

"It is always great to be a part of such an encouraging group of athletes," Rubio said. "Overall, I tried to not let the stress and high pressure get to me. Instead I tried to focus on how amazing the opportunity was as a freshman."

After a successful indoor season and NCAA Championships, the entire women's track team looks to continue to compete for championships as their outdoor season begins. The team is traveling to San Diego over spring break where they will compete in the Ross and Sharon Irwin Invitational, the Mangrum Invitational and the PLNU Collegiate Invitational.